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Memoirs of the private life of Marie Antoinette, queen of France ... To ...

Jeanne Louise H. Campan

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THE PRIVATE LIFE

OF

MARIE ANTOINETTE

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AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL

Memoirs of Madame Campan

FIRST LADY-IN-WAITING TO MARIE ANTOINETTE,
QUEEN OF FRANCE AND NAVARRE

WITH SOME

RECORDS OF HER LIFE AND CONVERSATIONS

BY

MM. BARRIÈRE AND MAIGNÉ

A New and Revised Edition

WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS ON STEEL

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

LONDON
RICHARD BENTLEY AND SON
Publishers in Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen
1883

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THE PRIVATE LIFE

OF

MARIE ANTOINETTE

QUEEN OF FRANCE AND NAVARRE

WITH

SKETCHES AND ANECDOTES OF THE COURTS OF LOUIS XIV., LOUIS XV., AND LOUIS XVI.

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Gravé par Duparcq, sous la direction de Henriquel Dupont. Sapres le portrait de Mme Lebrun, qui fait partie du Cabinet de S.M. le Mme de Pourtalès

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PREFACE
BY THE AUTHOR.

The shelves of our libraries bend under the weight of printed works relating to the last years of the eighteenth century. The great moral and political causes of our revolutions have already been ably traced by superior intellects. But posterity will look also for the secret springs by which those events were brought about. Memoirs, penned by ministers and favourites, will alone satisfy the inquisitiveness of our descendants, and even these only to a certain extent; for kings very seldom yield unbounded confidence.

Louis XVI. possessed an immense crowd of confidants, advisers, and guides; he selected them even from among the factions which attacked him. Never, perhaps, did he make a full disclosure to any one of them, and certainly he spoke with sincerity to but very few. He invariably kept the reins of all secret intrigues in his own hand; and thence, doubtless, arose the want of co-operation and the weakness which were so conspicuous in his measures. From these causes considerable chasms will be found in the detailed history of the Revolution.

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In order to become thoroughly acquainted with the latter years of the reign of Louis XV., memoirs written by the Duc de Choiseul, the Duc d'Aiguillon, the Maréchal de Richelieu,[1] *and the Duc de La Vauguyon, should be before us. To give us a faithful portrait of the unfortunate reign of Louis XVI. the Maréchal du Muy, M. de Maurepas, M. de Vergennes, M. de Malesherbes, the Duc d'Orléans, M. de La Fayette, the Abbé de Vermond, the Abbé Montesquiou, Mirabeau, the Duchesse de Polignac, and the Duchesse de Luynes, should have noted faithfully in writing all the transactions in which they took decided parts. As to the secret history of affairs of a later period, it has been disseminated among a much greater number of persons; there are ministers who have published memoirs, but solely when they had their own measures to justify, and then they confined themselves to the vindication of their own characters, without which powerful motive they probably would have written nothing. In general, those nearest to the sovereign, either by birth or by office, have left no memoirs; and in absolute monarchies the mainsprings of great events will be found in particulars which the most exalted persons alone could know. Those who have had but little under their charge find no subject*

[1] *I heard the Maréchal de Richelieu desire M. Campan, who was librarian to the Queen, not to buy the Memoirs which would certainly be attributed to him after his death, declaring them false by anticipation; and adding, that he was ignorant of orthography, and had never amused himself with writing. Shortly after the death of the Maréchal, one Soulavie put forth Memoirs of the Maréchal de Richelieu.*

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in it for a book; and those who have long borne the burden of public business conceive themselves to be forbidden by duty, or by respect for authority, to disclose all they know. Others, again, preserve notes, with the intention of reducing them to order when they shall have reached the period of a happy leisure; vain illusion of the ambitious, which they cherish, for the most part, but as a veil to conceal from their sight the hateful image of their inevitable downfall! and when it does at length take place, despair or chagrin deprives them of fortitude to dwell upon the dazzling period which they never cease to regret.

Louis XVI. meant to write his own memoirs: the manner in which his private papers were arranged indicated this design. The Queen also had the same intention; she long preserved a large correspondence, and a great number of minute reports, made in the spirit and upon the event of the moment. But after the 20th of June 1792 she was obliged to burn the larger portion of what she had so collected. Some parts of the correspondence preserved by the Queen were conveyed out of France.

Considering the rank and situations of the persons I have named as capable of elucidating by their writings the history of our political storms, it will not be imagined that I aim at placing myself on a level with them; but I have spent half my life either with the daughters of Louis XV., or with Marie Antoinette. I knew the characters of those Princesses; I became privy to some extraordinary facts, the publication of which may be interesting, and

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the truth of the details will form the merit of my work.

I was very young when I was placed about the Princesses, the daughters of Louis XV., in the capacity of Reader. I was acquainted with the Court of Versailles before the time of the marriage of Louis XVI. with the Archduchess Marie Antoinette.

My father, who was employed in the department of Foreign Affairs, enjoyed the reputation due to his talents, and to his useful labours. He had travelled much. Frenchmen, on their return home from foreign countries, bring with them a love for their own, increased in warmth; and no man was more penetrated with this feeling, which ought to be the first virtue of every placeman, than my father. Men of high title, academicians, and learned men, both natives and foreigners, sought my father's acquaintance; and were gratified by being admitted into his house.

Twenty years before the Revolution I often heard it remarked that the imposing character of the power of Louis XIV. was no longer to be found in the Palace of Versailles; that the institutions of the ancient monarchy were rapidly sinking; and that the people, crushed beneath the weight of taxes, were miserable, though silent; but that they began to give ear to the bold speeches of the philosophers, who loudly proclaimed their sufferings, and their rights; and, in short, that the age would not pass away without the occurrence of some grand shock, which would unsettle France, and change the course of its progress.

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Those who thus spoke were almost all partisans of M. Turgot's system of administration: they were Mirabeau, the father, Doctor Quesnay, Abbé Baudeau, and Abbé Nicoli; chargé d'affaires to Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuscany, and as enthusiastic an admirer of the maxims of the innovators as his sovereign.

My father sincerely respected the purity of intention of these politicians. With them, he acknowledged many abuses in the Government; but he did not give these political sectarians credit for the talent necessary for conducting a judicious reform. He told them frankly that in the art of moving the great machine of Government, the wisest of them was inferior to a good magistrate; and that if ever the helm of affairs should be put into their hands they would be speedily checked in the execution of their schemes by the immeasurable difference existing between the most brilliant theories and the simplest practice of administration.

Destiny having formerly placed me near crowned heads, I now amuse my solitude when in retirement with collecting a variety of facts which may prove interesting to my family when I shall be no more. The idea of collecting all the interesting materials which my memory affords, occurred to me from reading the work entitled "Paris, Versailles, and the Provinces in the Eighteenth Century." That work, composed by a man accustomed to the best society, is full of piquant anecdotes, nearly all of which have been recognised as true by the contemporaries of the author.

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I have put together all that concerned the domestic life of an unfortunate Princess, whose reputation is not yet cleared of the stains it received from the attacks of calumny, and who justly merited a different lot in life, a different place in the opinion of mankind after her fall. These Memoirs, which were finished ten years since, have met with the approbation of some persons; and my son may, perhaps, think proper to print them after my decease.[1] *I know not whether my Recollections will be thought worthy to see the light; but whilst I am occupied in writing them, my mind is diverted, I pass calmer hours, and I seem removed from the melancholy scenes by which I am now surrounded, so far as the sensibility of my heart will permit me to forget the present.*

[1] *When Madame Campan wrote these lines, she little thought that the death of her son would precede her own. See the Biographical Sketch of Madame Campan, p. xlvii.*

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NOTE

BY THE PUBLISHERS.

No edition of Madame Campan's Memoirs having been issued in England since the early part of this century, opportunity has been taken in printing the present edition to add notes occasionally from some of the works which have been published since that date, which throw a new light on many of the circumstances narrated by Madame Campan, and for which notes the Publishers desire to express their acknowledgments to Colonel Phipps, R.A.

Portraits of some of the personages referred to in the work have been added to the present edition. The brief Bourbon pedigree sketched out over leaf may also prove serviceable to the reader.

New Burlington Street,
October 1883.

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Bourbon.

	REIGNED.	END.
Henri IV. .	1589-1610	Assassinated.
Louis XIII. .	1610-1643	Natural death.
Louis XIV. .	1643-1715	Natural death.
Louis XV. .	1715-1774	Natural death.
Louis XVI. .	1774-1793	Guillotined.
[*Louis XVII.*	*1793-1795*]	Atrophy?
[*Louis XVIII.*	*1795-1814*]	..
,,	1814-1815	..
,,	1815-1824	Natural death.
Charles X. .	1824-1830	Abdicated.
Louis Philippe	1830-1848	Abdicated.
[*Henri V.* .	..	] Natural death.
[*Philippe* .	..	] ..

1589-1610.
HENRI IV. of Navarre, 1553-1610. = Marie de Medic his first wife, I

1610-1648.
LOUIS XIII. 1601-1643. = Anne of Austria, Philip III. o

1643-1715. 1660
LOUIS XIV. 1638-1715. = Maria Theresa, daughter of Philip IV. of Spain, 1638-1683.

Louis, Le Grand Dauphin, 1661-1711. = Marie Anne Christine Victoire of Bavaria.

Louis, Duc de Bourgogne, Dauphin, 1682-1712. = Marie Adelaide, daughter of Victor Amadeus II. of Savoy.

Philippe, Duc d'Anjou, 1683-1746; afterwards Philip V. of Spain. From whom are derived the Bourbon Hou SPAIN, NAPLES, and PARMA.

Louis, 1704-5.

Louis, Duc de Bretagne, 1707-1712.

1715-1774. 1725
LOUIS XV., Duc d'Anjou, 1710-1774. = Maria Leczinska, daughter of Stanislaus, King of Poland, 1703-1768.

Louis,[1] The Dauphin, 1729-1765. = Marie Josephine, daughter of Frederick Augustus II. of Saxony, and King of Poland as Augustus III. 1731-1767.

Duc d'Anjou, 1730-33.

Louise Elizabeth. = Philippe, Duke of Parma.

Adelaide, 1732-1800.

Victo 1733-1

1774-93. 1770
LOUIS XVI., Duc de Berri, 1754-1793. = Marie Antoinette, daughter of Francis I. of Austria, and Maria Theresa, 1755-1793.

1814, 1815-24. 1771
LOUIS XVIII. (Louis Stanislaus Xavier), Comte de Provence, Comte de Lille, 1755-1824. S.P. = Marie Josephine Louise, daughter of Victor Amadeus III. of Sardinia, 1753-1810.

1824-30. 1772
CHARLES X. (Charles Philip), Comte d'Artois, 1757-1836. = Marie Thérèse, daughter of Victor Amadeus III. of Sardinia, 1756-1805.

Marie Thérèse Charlotte (Madame Royale) 1778-1851. S.P.

1799
Louis, Duc d'Angoulême. See side.

Louis, Dauphin, 1781-1789.

Louis, Duc de Normandie, *LOUIS XVII.* 1785-1795.

Sophie. 1786-1788?

1799
Louis Antoine, Duc d'Angoulême, Dauphin, 1775-1844. See side. S.P. = Marie Thérèse Charlotte de Bourbon.

1816
Charles Ferdinand, Duc de Berri, 1778-1820. = Caroline Ferdinand Louise, daughter of Francis I., King of Naples, 1798-1870.

1845
Louise Marie Thérèse, 1819-1864. = Duke (Charles III.) of Parma, 1823-1854.

HENRI V., Duc de Bordeaux, *COMTE DE CHAMBORD*, 1820-1883. 1846 = Marie Thérèse Beatrice, daughter of François IV., Duke of Modena, 1817, living in 1883. S.P.

[1] The Dauphin, father of Louis XVI., was married in the first instance to a Princess Mary of Spain.

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e the Period of this Work.

Orleans.

For economy of space the names of some of the Princes and Princesses are omitted in this branch of the Family.

ing no issue by
ter of Valois).

ghter of
n.

Philippe, Duc d'Orléans, 1640-1701. = { 1661, Henrietta Maria, daughter of Charles I. (of England), 1644-1670. 1671, Charlotte Elizabeth, daughter of the Elector Palatine, 1652-1722.

Maria Louisa, married Charles II. of Spain.

Philippe, Duc d'Orléans, 1674-1723. (Regent.) = 1692 Françoise Marie de Bourbon, Mademoiselle de Blois (natural daughter of Louis XIV. by Madame de Montespan), 1677-1749.

, Duc de Berri 1686-1714. = 1710 *Maria Louise Elis, daughter of the Regent Duc d'Orléans, 1695-1719.* S.P.

Philippe Louis, Duc d'Orléans, 1703-1752. = Augusta, Princess of Baden.

Louis Philippe, Duc d'Orléans, 1725-1785. = { Louise Henrietta, daughter of the Prince de Conti. Madame de Montesson, 1737-1806.

Sophie, 1734-17 ? | Louise, 1737-1787 ? | Marie, died young. | Felicité, died young.

Louis Philippe Joseph, Duc d'Orléans (Égalité), 1747-1793. = 1769 Louisa Maria Adelaide, daughter of the Duc de Penthièvre, 1753-1821. | Duc de Chartres.

1802 = Charles Emanuel IV. of Sardinia.

Elizabeth, 1764-1794. | A daughter, died young.

1880-1848. LOUIS PHILIPPE, Duc d'Orléans, Duc de Chartres, Comte de Neuilly, 1773-1850. = 1809 Maria Amelia, daughter of Ferdinand I., King of Naples, 1782-1866.

Antoine Philippe, Duc de Montpensier, 1775-1806. S.P. | Adelaide, 1777-1847. S.P. | Alphonse Leodeja, Comte de Beaujolais, 1779-1808. S.P.

1837 = Helen Louisa Elizabeth of Mecklenburg Schwerin, 1814-1858.

Robert Philippe Louis Eugène Ferdinand, Duc de Chartres, 1840, living 1883, and has issue.

Louis Charles Philippe Raphael, Duc de Nemours, 1814, living 1883. = 1840 Victoria Augusta Antoinette of Saxe-Coburg Gotha, 1822-1857.

Louis Philippe Maria Ferdinand Gaston, Comte d'Eu, 1842, living, and married, in 1883, and has issue.

Ferdinand Philippe Maria, Duc d'Alençon, 1844, living, and married, in 1883, and has issue.

Two daughters.

François Ferdinand Philippe Louis Maria, Prince de Joinville, 1818, living 1883. = 1843 Frances Caroline Jane of Brazil, 1824- .

Issue, a son and a daughter.

Henri Eugène Philippe Louis, Duc d'Aumale, 1822, living 1883. = 1844 Maria Caroline Augusta of the Two Sicilies, 1822-1869.

Issue, two sons.

Antoine Philippe Louis, Duc de Montpensier, 1824, living in 1883. = 1846 Maria Louisa Ferdinanda of Spain, 1832- .

Issue, a son and four daughters.

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POSTSCRIPT.

THE following chronological notes upon some of the principal personages referred to in the book may also be serviceable to the reader :—

AIGUILLON, Duc d', Armand de Vignerot (1720-1782). The Duc de Choiseul having been dismissed in September 1770, the Duc d'Aiguillon, after an interregnum, became foreign and chief minister in June 1771 by the support of Madame du Barry; he was very unpopular, and even at the time of his appointment was being prosecuted before the Parliament of Paris for acts committed in his government of Brittany; the first partition of Poland was allowed to take place while he was minister, without any active opposition from France; he was dismissed in 1774 by Louis XVI. on his accession.

ARTOIS, Comte d', Charles Philippe (1757-1836), the second brother of Louis XVI., afterwards King, as Charles X. (1824-1830).

AUGUIÉ, Madame, wife of a Receveur-Général des Finances, sister of Madame Campan, and "Dresser" to Marie Antoinette; killed herself when about to be arrested, to escape condemnation by the Revolutionary Tribunal, so as to save her property for her family.

BRIENNE, Comte de, Étienne Charles de Loménie (1727-1794), successively Bishop of Condom, Archbishop of Toulouse, Archbishop of Sens, Cardinal 1788; succeeded Calonne in 1787 as Controller of the Finances, and then chief minister; assembled the States-General in 1788; dismissed and replaced by Necker, 25th August 1788; took the oath to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, but was imprisoned, and died in 1794.

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CAMPAN, Madame Jeanne Louis Henriette (1752-1822), *née* Genest or Genet, Reader to Mesdames the aunts of Louis XVI., daughters of Louis XV., "Dresser" of Marie Antoinette and "First Woman" in Reversion; after the Terror established a school for girls, which became fashionable, and at which were educated Hortense Beauharnais, some of the sisters of Bonaparte, and Louise Emilie de Beauharnais (later Madame de la Valette), etc.; in 1805 placed by Napoleon at head of school at Écouen for daughters of officers of the Légion d'Honneur till 1814; neglected after the Restoration.

CAMPAN, Monsieur, father-in-law of Madame Campan, Librarian and Reader to Marie Antoinette; died 1791.

CAROLINE, Marie-Caroline-Louise (1752-1814), Archduchess of Austria, sister of Marie Antoinette; married (1768) Ferdinand I., King of the Two Sicilies (the Queen Caroline of Nelson).

CLERMONT, Comte de, Louis de Bourbon-Condé (1709-1770), son of Louis III., Prince de Condé, and brother of the Comte de Charolais.

CHAROLAIS, Comte de, Charles de Bourbon-Condé (1700-1760), brother to the Comte de Clermont.

CHARTRES, Duc de, title borne (1747-1785) by Louis Philippe Joseph, who then (1785) became Duc d'Orléans (Égalité), and from 1785 by Louis Philippe, son of Égalité, later, in 1830, King of the French.

CHOISEUL, Duc de, Étienne François (1719-1785), foreign and chief minister under Louis XV. from 1758 to September 1770, when he was disgraced by the interest of Madame du Barry, who succeeded, in 1771, in getting her creature, the Duc d'Aiguillon, installed in his place; he was such a popular, though not far-sighted, minister that even the courtiers visited him on his disgrace.

LAMBALLE, Princesse de, Marie Thérèse de Savoie-Carignan (1749-1792), married Louis Alexandre de Bourbon-Penthièvre, Prince de Lamballe, son of the Duc de Penthièvre, and grandson of the Comte de Toulouse, the illegitimate son of Louis XIV., and of Madame de Montespan, who died in 1768; she became superintendent of the household of Marie Antoinette,

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imprisoned at La Force, and murdered by the Septembriseurs in 1792.

LAMOTTE, Comtesse de, Jeanne de (Valois) Luz de Saint Rémi (1756-1791), one of the descendants of a natural son of Henri II.; married M. de Lamotte, a gendarme, of noble birth, later one of the guards of the Comte d'Artois; she carried out the plot of the diamond necklace, duping Cardinal de Rohan, with the help of Mademoiselle d'Oliva, who resembled the Queen; she was sentenced to be branded and imprisoned for life, but escaped, and died in England 1791.

LAUZUN, Duc de (later Duc de Biron), Armand Louis (1747-1793), served in America against the English; deputy to the Assemblée Nationale; joined the revolutionary party, and as General Biron commanded the Army of the Rhine in 1792, and fought against the Vendeans in 1793, but was arrested and executed in the same year.

LECZINSKA, Maria (1703-1768), daughter of Stanislaus Leczinska (1682-1766), the ex-King of Poland (given in 1738 the Duchy of Lorraine for his life); she married Louis XV. in 1725.

MAUREPAS, Comte de, Jean Fréderic Phélippeaux (1701-1781), minister under Louis XV., till disgraced by the interest of Madame de Pompadour (1749), recalled by Louis XVI. on his accession (1774), chief minister till death (1781).

MESDAMES, the Princesses, daughters of Louis XV. and aunts of Louis XVI.—Adelaide (1732-1800), Victoire (1733-1799), Sophie (1734-17—), Louise (1737-1787?). Adelaide and Victoire, the only two alive at the overthrow of the monarchy, were allowed to leave France in 1791, and died at Trieste.

POLIGNAC, Comtesse Jules de, *née* Polastron (1749-1793), married the Comte (later, in 1780, Duc) de Polignac, the father of the Princes Armand and Jules de Polignac of the times of Napoleon and of Charles X.; she and her husband emigrated in 1789; she died at Vienna, 1793.

PROVENCE, Comte de, Louis Stanislaus Xavier (1755-1824), eldest brother of Louis XVI.; emigrated in 1791, escaping at the time of the King's flight to Varennes, afterwards King, as Louis XVIII. (1814-1824).

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ROHAN, Louis René, Prince de, Cardinal (1734-1803), Grand Almoner, Ambassador at Vienna (1772-1794), the dupe of the diamond necklace plot; after being acquitted at the trial, he eventually retired to his diocese of Strasbourg; deputy to the États Généraux, 1789; withdrew from France (1791); resigned his see on the promulgation of the Concordat of 1801.

VERGENNES, Comte de, Charles Gravier (1717-1787), Foreign Minister of Louis XVI., and in 1783 President of the Council of Finance.

VERMOND, Abbé de, Reader to the Queen Marie Antoinette.

*** *See also Bourbon and Orleans pedigree given a few pages previously.*

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

MADAME CAMPAN

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PREFATORY

MEMOIR OF MADAME CAMPAN.

JEANNE LOUISE HENRIETTE GENET was born at Paris, on the 6th of October 1752. M. Genet, her father, had obtained, through his own merit and the protection of the Duc de Choiseul, the place of first clerk in the office of the minister for foreign affairs. Literature, which he had cultivated in his youth, was often the solace of his leisure hours.

Surrounded by a numerous family, he made the instruction of his children his chief recreation, and omitted nothing which was necessary to render them highly accomplished. The progress of the youthful Henriette in the study of music and of foreign languages was surprising; the celebrated Albanèze instructed her in singing, and Goldoni taught her Italian. Tasso, Milton, Dante, and even Shakespeare, soon became familiar to her. But her studies were particularly directed to the acquisition of a correct and elegant style of reading. From prose to verse, from an ode to an epistle, a comedy or a sermon, she was instructed to pass, with the requisite variations of modulation and delivery. Rochon de Chabannes, Duclos, Barthe, Marmontel, and Thomas, took pleasure in hearing her recite the finest scenes of Racine. Her memory and genius at the age of fourteen charmed them; they talked of her talents in society, and perhaps applauded them too highly. A young female is always sure to pay dearly for the celebrity she acquires: if she is

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beautiful, all the women become her rivals; if she has talents, there are many of the other sex weak enough to be jealous of them.

Mademoiselle Genet was spoken of at Court. Some ladies of high rank, who took an interest in the welfare of her family, obtained for her the place of reader to the Princesses. Her presentation, and the circumstances which preceded it, left a strong impression on her mind. "I was then fifteen;" she says, "my father felt some regret at yielding me up at so early an age to the jealousies of the Court. The day on which I first put on my court dress, and went to embrace him in his study, tears filled his eyes, and mingled with the expression of his pleasure. I possessed some agreeable talents, in addition to the instruction which it had been his delight to bestow on me. He enumerated all my little accomplishments, to convince me of the vexations they would not fail to draw upon me. 'The Princesses,' said he, 'will take pleasure in exercising your talents; the great have the art of applauding gracefully, and always to excess. Be not too much elated with these compliments, rather let them put you on your guard. Every time you receive such flattering marks of approbation, the number of your enemies will increase. I am warning you, my love, of the inevitable troubles attached to the course of life on which you are entering; and I protest to you even now, whilst you are thus transported with your good fortune, that could I have provided for you otherwise, I would never have abandoned my dear girl to the anxieties and dangers of a court.'"

Mademoiselle Genet, at fifteen, was naturally less of a philosopher than her father was at forty. Her eyes were dazzled by the splendour which glittered at Versailles. "The Queen, Maria Leczinska, the wife of Louis XV., died," she says, "just before I was presented at Court. The grand apartments hung with black, the great chairs of state, raised on several steps, and surmounted by a canopy adorned with plumes; the caparisoned

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horses, the immense retinue in court mourning, the enormous shoulder-knots, embroidered with gold and silver spangles, which decorated the coats of the pages and footmen—all this magnificence had such an effect on my senses that I could scarcely support myself when introduced to the Princesses. The first day of my reading in the inner apartment of Madame Victoire I found it impossible to pronounce more than two sentences; my heart palpitated, my voice faltered, and my sight failed. How well understood was the potent magic of the grandeur and dignity which ought to surround sovereigns! Marie Antoinette, dressed in white, with a plain straw hat, and a little switch in her hand, walking on foot, followed by a single servant, through the walks leading to the Petit Trianon, would never have thus disconcerted me; and I believe this extreme simplicity was the first and only real mistake of all those with which she is reproached."

When once her awe and confusion had subsided, Mademoiselle Genet was enabled to form a more accurate judgment of her situation. It was by no means attractive; the court of the Princesses, far removed from the revels and licentious pleasures to which Louis XV. was addicted, was grave, methodical, and dull. Madame Adelaide, the eldest of the Princesses, lived secluded in the interior of her apartments; Madame Sophie was haughty; Madame Louise a devotee. The gloomy pleasures of pride and the exercises of scrupulous devotion have few charms for youth. Mademoiselle Genet, however, never quitted the Princesses' apartments; but she attached herself most particularly to Madame Victoire. This Princess had possessed beauty; her countenance bore an expression of benevolence, and her conversation was kind, free, and unaffected. The young Reader excited in her that feeling which a woman in years, of an affectionate disposition, readily extends to young people who are growing up in her sight, and who already possess some useful talents. Whole days were passed in reading to the Princess, as

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she sat at work in her apartment. Mademoiselle Genet frequently saw there Louis XV., of whom she would often relate the following anecdote:—

"One day, at the Château of Compiègne, the King came in whilst I was reading to Madame. I rose and went into another room. Alone, in an apartment from which there was no outlet, with no book but a Massillon, which I had been reading to the Princess; happy in all the lightness and gaiety of fifteen, I amused myself with turning swiftly round, with my court hoop, and suddenly kneeling down to see my rose-coloured silk petticoat swelled around me by the wind. In the midst of this grave employment enters his Majesty, followed by one of the Princesses. I attempt to rise; my feet stumble, and down I fall in the midst of my robes, puffed out by the wind. "*Daughter*," said Louis XV., laughing heartily, "*I advise you to send back to school a Reader who makes cheeses.*" The railleries of Louis XV. were often much more cutting, as Mademoiselle Genet had experienced on another occasion, which, thirty years afterwards, she could not relate without an emotion of fear, which it seemed as if she had never overcome. "Louis XV," she said, "had the most imposing presence. His eyes remained fixed upon you all the time he was speaking; and, notwithstanding the beauty of his features, he inspired a sort of fear. I was very young, it is true, when he first spoke to me; you shall judge whether it was in a very gracious manner. I was fifteen. The King was going out to hunt, and a numerous retinue followed him. As he stopped opposite me he said, 'Mademoiselle Genet, I am assured you are very learned, and understand four or five foreign languages.' 'I know only two, Sire,' I answered, trembling. 'Which are they?' 'English and Italian.' 'Do you speak them fluently?' 'Yes, Sire, very fluently.' 'That is quite enough to drive a husband mad.' After this pretty compliment the King went on; the retinue saluted me, laughing; and, for my part, I remained motionless with surprise

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and confusion for some moments on the spot where I stood."

It would have been well if Louis XV. had never indulged in more cutting repartees. Kings have no right to be scoffers; raillery is a warfare that requires equal arms, for one does not banter to advantage with a wit who rules over twenty millions of subjects. Justice, however, demands the acknowledgment that although this monarch was often the aggressor, he endured the smartest retorts without losing his temper. Possibly the unexpected familiarity of attacks of this kind might be a pungent novelty to a King, so long wearied by the burthen of greatness. With an easy temper, a melancholy turn of mind, a satirical genius, this prince, majestic in his Court, irresolute in council, agreeable at an evening party, could no longer escape from *ennui* without the aid of intemperance or debauchery. A woman, whose youth and beauty were sullied by prostitution, astonished Versailles at this time by the disgraceful influence she had acquired. Madame du Barry was effecting the dismissal of the minister who had just negotiated the marriage of the Dauphin with the Archduchess Marie Antoinette of Austria. The intrigues of the favourite, the rivalry between the Ducs de Choiseul and d'Aiguillon, the disgrace of the one, and the shameful elevation of the other, occupied the last moments of the reign of Louis XV.

The Duc de Choiseul, fickle, haughty, and violent, but agreeable, brilliant, and generous, had an active mind, great talents, and vast ideas. By means of alterations which had become necessary in the army, new establishments in the navy, new institutions and alliances, he wished to raise France from the abasement into which she had sunk through a long course of reverses. He sought the support of public opinion, was a friend to parliaments, an enemy to the Jesuits, and wielded power with a light and easy hand. Resistance, provided it was open and honourable, did not exasperate him; he had faith in the nation when the Government endeavoured to

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render it happy at home, powerful and respected abroad. His pride, a natural failing, became a virtue when it taught him never to stoop to flatter shameful caprices. He was beloved whilst in power; sought, I had almost said flattered, when in exile; and he inspired courtiers with courage to remain faithful to the unfortunate, a virtue hitherto unknown to them.

D'Aiguillon, with considerable address, some boldness, and great perseverance, was obdurate, despotic, and tyrannical. He gained credit for talents because he possessed the spirit of intrigue; but the division of Poland, effected, as it were, in his sight, has for ever blasted his reputation both as a politician and as a man. As a subtle courtier, a bad man, and an unskilful minister, he became obnoxious to public hatred, which, though he defied it, overwhelmed him at last.

The Duc d'Aiguillon did not understand that force is one of the weakest springs of power, when it is not supported by the confidence created by extensive information, great services performed, and, above all, by striking successes. He was deceived by the example of his grandfather. Richelieu, while he oppressed the great, rendered essential services to France. The abasement of Austria; the humiliation of Spain; the violent restoration of order in the State; the honours paid to literature; the encouragement of commerce, redeemed in a great degree the tyrannical acts of which he is justly accused. He imparted to the measures of Government something of the loftiness of his own character. Undoubtedly, he was feared; but he was also admired.

Since the time of Louis XIII. France and Austria had changed places; the one still rising, the other sinking. Under Louis XV. the House of Bourbon reigned at Naples and Madrid as well as at Versailles. The triumphs of the arms of France or the wisdom of her treaties had successively acquired Alsace, Franche-Comté, Flanders, and Lorraine. The magnanimous Maria Theresa had just replaced a mutilated crown

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on her head; the pride of the heiress of Randolph of Hapsburg had stooped so low as to flatter the vanity of Jeanne Poisson, Marquise de Pompadour, by calling her her friend. A warlike power suddenly arising close to Austria, excited her jealousy, and occupied her attention and her forces. The Duc de Choiseul, being minister, was at liberty to direct his attention to a greater distance.

After the battle of Pultowa, Russia, long confined to the frozen regions of the north, began to be reckoned as one of the European powers. Four women, successively placed on the throne of the Czars, had completed the work of a great man. A persevering system of aggrandisement, and, what is more extraordinary, a system openly declared, was rapidly being carried into effect. Now that Russia has adopted only so much of the arts and civilisation of Europe as may increase her military power, without enervating her soldiers; now that that people, born on a barren soil, in a severe climate, has breathed the sweet pure air of our countries, if that powerful Colossus, which already presses upon the centre of Europe, should, with extended arms, succeed in reaching from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, what refuge, what rampart would remain for the independence of the threatened nations? They could find no security but in the coalition of the Southern States; which was precisely the object of the family compact, prudently conceived, and effected with address by the Duc de Choiseul, who thereby strengthened the alliance with Austria. Instead, therefore, of stigmatising the shallowness of the minister, it would be more just to pay honour to his foresight. Nevertheless, the alliance with Austria was the pretext for the attacks directed against him.

The Duc de Choiseul had the parliaments, the philosophers, and public opinion on his side. On that of the Duc d'Aiguillon were the devotees and Madame du Barry. The two factions disputed over the dying Louis XV., and disturbed the first years of Louis XVI.; whilst the fatal influence which the anti-Austrian party

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exercised over the fate of the youthful Marie Antoinette will presently appear.

The idea of uniting the daughter of Maria Theresa with the grandson of Louis XV. had been conceived by the Duc de Choiseul before his fall. By this marriage he cemented the alliance of the two States, and thought he was securing for himself the favour of a new reign. Thus was explained the sense of that distich, according to which Austria was to expect more from marriage than from war or treaties.[1]

Maria Theresa, happy, though afflicted, had no other uneasiness on her dear daughter's account than that which arose from their separation, and yet prophetic voices seemed already to threaten the future evils which awaited her.

Madame Campan often related an anecdote which she had heard from the governor of the children of Prince Kaunitz. There was at that time at Vienna a doctor named Gassner,[2] who had fled thither to seek an asylum against the persecutions of his sovereign, one of the ecclesiastical electors. Gassner, gifted with an extraordinary warmth of imagination, imagined that he received inspirations. The Empress protected him; saw him occasionally; rallied him on his visions, and, nevertheless, heard them with a sort of interest. "Tell me," said she to him one day, "whether my Antoinette will be happy." Gassner turned pale, and remained silent. Being still pressed by the Empress, and wishing to give a general kind of expression to the idea with which he seemed deeply occupied, "*Madame*," he replied, "*there are crosses for all shoulders.*"

Goethe, who was then young, was completing his

[1] It is said that the Sultan, on receiving the decree of the Convention which ordained the abolition of royalty in France, could not help saying, "At least the Republic will not marry an archduchess."

[2] Jean Joseph Gassner, born at Gratz, a pretender to miraculous powers.

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studies at Strasburg. In an isle in the middle of the Rhine a pavilion had been erected, intended to receive Marie Antoinette and her suite. "I was admitted into it," says Goethe in his Memoirs. "On my entrance I was struck with the subject depicted on the tapestry with which the principal pavilion was hung, in which were seen Jason, Creusa, and Medea—that is to say, a representation of the most fatal union commemorated in history. On the left of the throne the bride, surrounded by friends and distracted attendants, was struggling with a dreadful death. Jason, on the other side, was starting back, struck with horror at the sight of his murdered children, and the Fury was soaring into the air, in her chariot drawn by dragons. Superstition apart, this strange coincidence was really striking. The husband, the bride, and the children were victims in both cases; the fatal omen seemed accomplished in every point." Maria Theresa might have repeated the fine verses which the father of Creusa addresses to his expiring daughter, in the *Medea* of Corneille:—

> "This, then, my child, the hymeneal day,
> The royal union anxiously expected!
> Stern fate extinguishes the bridal torch,
> And for thy marriage-bed the tomb awaits thee."

The occurrences at the Place Louis XV. on the marriage festivities at Paris are generally known. The conflagration of the scaffolds intended for the fireworks, the want of foresight of the authorities, the avidity of robbers, the murderous career of the coaches, brought about and aggravated the disasters of that day; and the young Dauphiness, coming from Versailles, by the Cours la Reine, elated with joy, brilliantly decorated, and eager to witness the rejoicings of the whole people, fled, struck with consternation and drowned in tears, whilst the dreadful scene and the cries of the dying pursued her distracted imagination.

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It is here that the Memoirs of Madame Campan[1] may truly be said to begin; the first chapter, descriptive of the Court of Louis XV., being only a lively introduction. During a period of twenty years, from the marriage festivities to the attack of the 10th of August, Madame Campan never quitted Marie Antoinette. On the Queen's side all was goodness and unreserved confidence; it will be seen whether Madame Campan did not return the favour of her patroness by gratitude, faith, and devotedness, proof against all calamity, and superior to all danger. In speaking of Marie Antoinette she has depicted the hatred of her enemies, the avidity of her flatterers, and the disinterestedness of the real friends whom she possessed, although seated on the throne. But as she generally confines herself to the domestic circle in which Marie Antoinette delighted, it is necessary to take a glance at the spirit of that period, and particularly at the manners of society.

I shall not recall the scandalous years of the regency, when the Court, escaping from the constraint of a long course of hypocrisy, combined the excesses of debauchery with the most audacious impiety. But it is necessary to notice particularly the reign of Louis XV., because the corruption of that reign may be divided into two distinct periods. Of the first of these Richelieu was the model and the hero. To love without pleasure; to yield without resistance; to part without regret; to call duty a weakness, honour a prejudice, delicacy affectation—such were the manners of the times; seduction had its code, and immorality was reduced to principles. Even these rapid successes soon tired those who obtained them; perhaps because the facility with which triumphs were gained diminished their value. Courtiers and rich financiers maintained, at enormous expense, beauties

[1] The family of Campan, originally from the valley of Campan, in Berne, had adopted the name of that place as their own surname. Their true name was Berthollet. Mademoiselle Genet had married M. Campan, whose father was Secretary of the Queen's Closet.

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with whom they were not expected even to be acquainted; vice became a mere luxury of vanity; and the condition of a courtezan led rapidly to fortune and even to honour.

In the years preceding the accession of Louis XVI. to the throne, and those immediately following, society presented a new spectacle. Manners were not improved, but altered. By a strange abuse, apologies were found for depravity, in the philosophical ideas which daily grew more fashionable. Partisans of these principles promulgated such noble maxims, and talked so well that they thought themselves not obliged to act with propriety. Men might be inconstant husbands, and women faithless wives, so that they spoke with respect, with enthusiasm, of the sacred duties of marriage. The love of virtue and of mankind was sufficient without practical morality. Women, surrounded by their lovers, discussed the means of regenerating social order. There was not a philosopher admitted into one of the fashionable circles who did not modestly compare himself to Socrates with Aspasia; and Diderot, the daring author of *Philosophical Thoughts*, and the licentious writer of *Bijoux Indiscrets*, though he aspired to the glory of Plato, did not blush to imitate Petronius.

The writings of the philosophers, ill understood at that period, but read with avidity, gave them a great influence over public opinion. The Court, long accustomed to the influence which wit, polished manners, and the habit of filling great offices secured to it, was astonished to see this new power springing up by its side. Instead of opposing, it flattered this competitor. At the tables and in the *salons* of the first nobles the distinctions of rank were boldly treated as prejudices. Principles of equality found partisans amongst the nobility, and it became almost an acknowledged truth that merit was superior to birth.

Thus, whilst the middle classes were rising, proud of their knowledge, their talents, their attainments, and the

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higher ranks met them half way, the Court was still a slave to the laws of etiquette. From the cradle to the grave, at table, at council, in the chase, in the army, even in their private apartments, princes in France were governed by ceremonial rules. The injudicious laws of etiquette pursued them to the mysteries of the nuptial bed. Judge how impatiently a young princess, lively, affectionate, and free, bred in the simplicity of the German courts, must have endured the tyrannical customs which, never suffering her for a single instant to be a wife, mother, or friend, reduced her to the dignified *ennui* of being always a queen. The respectable lady, who was placed near her as a vigilant minister of the laws of etiquette, instead of alleviating their weight, rendered their yoke intolerable to her. The evil was not, however, so serious when it only affected the attendants; because in these cases the Queen used merely to laugh at it. Let Madame Campan herself relate an anecdote on this subject in which she was concerned.

"Madame de Noailles," she says, in a manuscript fragment, "abounded in virtues; I cannot pretend to deny it. Her piety, charity, and irreproachable morals rendered her worthy of praise; but etiquette was to her a sort of atmosphere; at the slightest derangement of the consecrated order, one would have thought she would have been stifled, and that the principles of life would forsake her frame.

"One day, I unintentionally threw this poor lady into a terrible agony. The Queen was receiving I know not whom—some persons just presented, I believe; the lady of honour, the Queen's tire-woman, and the ladies of the bed-chamber, were behind the Queen. I was near the throne, with the two women on duty. All was right—at least I thought so. Suddenly I perceived the eyes of Madame de Noailles fixed on mine. She made a sign with her head, and then raised her eyebrows to the top of her forehead, lowered them, raised them again, then began to make little signs with her hand. From all

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this pantomime, I could easily perceive that something was not as it should be; and as I looked about on all sides to find out what it was, the agitation of the countess kept increasing. The Queen, who perceived all this, looked at me with a smile; I found means to approach her Majesty, who said to me in a whisper, '*Let down your lappets, or the countess will expire.*' All this bustle arose from two unlucky pins which fastened up my lappets, whilst the etiquette of costume said, '*Lappets hanging down.*'"

This contempt of the silly vanities of etiquette became the pretext for the first reproaches levelled at the Queen. What misconduct might not be dreaded from a princess who could absolutely go out without a hoop! and who, in the *salons* of Trianon, instead of discussing the important rights to chairs and stools, good-naturedly invited everybody to be seated.[1] The anti-Austrian

[1] Even for the suppression of the most ridiculous customs the Queen was never forgiven. The respectable dowagers, who had passed their innocent youth in the Court of Louis XV., and under the regency, considered the abolition of the hoop as a violation of morals. Madame Campan herself mentions, almost with regret, that the great ruffs and fardingales worn in the Court of the last of the Valois, were not adopted without a motive; that those appendages, indifferent in appearance, actually had the effect of banishing every idea of gallantry.

Although such a precaution may appear, at least, a little singular, in the dissolute Court of Henry III., I shall not pretend to deny the efficacy of the fardingale; I will only add a little anecdole quoted by Laplace.

"M. de Fresne Forget, being one day in company with the Queen Marguerite, told her he was astonished how men and women with such great ruffs could eat soup without spoiling them; and still more how the ladies could be gallant with their great fardingales. The Queen made no answer at that time, but a few days after, having a very large ruff on, and some *bouilli* to eat, she ordered a very long spoon to be brought, and ate her *bouilli* with it, without soiling her ruff. Upon which, addressing herself to M. de Fresne, she said, laughing, 'There now, you see, with a little ingenuity one may manage anything.' 'Yes, faith, Madame,' said the good man, 'as far as regards the soup I am satisfied.'—Vol. ii. p. 350, of *Laplace's Collection.*

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party, discontented and vindictive, became spies upon her conduct, exaggerated her slightest errors, and calumniated her most innocent proceedings. "What seems unaccountable at the first glance," says Montjoie, whose opinions must certainly be considered genuine, "and what overwhelms me with grief, is that the first attacks on the reputation of the Queen proceeded from the bosom of the Court. What interest could the courtiers have in seeking her destruction, which involved that of the King? Was it not drying up the source of all the advantages they enjoyed, or could hope for?"

A scandalous plot which was to compromise the most august name, and to dishonour that of a cardinal, was already in preparation. It was conceived by an intriguing female, its principal agent was a forger of writings, it was seconded by a courtezan, unravelled by a priest, and related by a Jesuit. As if the most singular coincidences were to appear in this famous suit, together with the most odious contrasts, the name of Valois now figured along with those of Rohan, Austria, and Bourbon. Whilst everything conspired to show the guilt of a libertine and credulous priest, a great lord, who with 800,000 livres per annum was nevertheless ruined, an ecclesiastical prince, at once the dupe of a swindler, a woman of intrigue, and a quack; yet it was the Queen whom his credulity injured, as much as did, perhaps, his guilty hopes; it was Marie Antoinette to whom suspicion was daringly attached. The Court, the clergy, and the parliaments leagued together to humble the throne, and the Queen who sat on it.

The issue of this famous suit is known. The cardinal was acquitted. Madame de Lamotte, condemned, exposed, and saved only by flight, hastened to publish a pamphlet of the most odious description against the Queen. From that period, so fatal to Marie Antoinette, until her death attacks of this species were incessantly renewed against her. Party spirit lent force to them; the press and the arts lent themselves with equal sub-

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serviency to the fury of her enemies. Obscene prints, licentious verses, infamous libels, atrocious accusations—*I have seen all, I have read all,* and I wish I could add (like that unfortunate Princess, on one of the most honourable occasions of her life), *I have forgotten all.* The perusal of these monuments of implacable hatred leaves an impression of ineffable disgust, and of poignant distress at the idea of the woes accumulated by calumny on the head of the hapless Marie Antoinette.

When the terrible Danton exclaimed, "*The kings of Europe menace us; it behoves us to defy them; let us throw down to them, as our gage, the head of a king!*" These detestable words, followed by so cruel, so lamentable a result formed, however, a formidable stroke of policy. But the Queen! What horrible reasons of state could Danton, Collot d'Herbois, and Robespierre allege against her? Where did they find that those Greeks and Romans, whose military virtues our soldiers recalled, used to murder weak and defenceless beings? What savage greatness did they discover in stirring up a whole nation to avenge their quarrel on a woman? Rather what unprecedented cowardice! What remained of her former power? Had not the 10th of August torn the diadem from her brow? She was a captive, a widow, trembling for her children! In those judges, who at once outraged modesty and nature; in that people whose vilest scoffs pursued her to the scaffold, who could have recognised the generous people of France? No, of all the crimes which so shockingly disgraced the Revolution, none is more calculated to show to what a pitch the spirit of party, when it has fermented in the most corrupt hearts, can deprave the character of a nation.

The news of this dreadful event reached Madame Campan in an obscure retreat which she had chosen. She had not succeeded in her endeavours to share the Queen's captivity, and she expected every moment a similar fate. After escaping, almost miraculously, from the murderous fury of the Marseillais; after being re-

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pulsed by Pétion, when she implored the favour of being confined in the Temple; after being denounced and pursued by Robespierre, and entrusted, through the entire confidence of the King and Queen, with papers of the utmost importance, Madame Campan went to conceal her charge and indulge her grief at Coubertin, in the valley of Chevreuse. Madame Auguié, her sister, had just committed suicide, at the very moment of her arrest.[1] The scaffold awaited Madame Campan, when the 9th of Thermidor restored her to life; but did not restore to her the most constant object of her thoughts, her zeal, and her devotion.

A new career now opened to Madame Campan. The information and talents she possessed were about to become useful to her. At Coubertin, surrounded by her nieces, she was fond of directing their studies, as much to divert her mind for a time from her troubles as to form their disposition and judgment. This occupation caused her ideas to revert to the subject of education, and awakened once more the inclinations of her youth. At the age of twelve years Mademoiselle Genet could never meet a school of young ladies passing through the streets without feeling ambitious of the situation and authority of their mistress. Her abode at Court had diverted but not altered her inclinations. At a more advanced age, when able to enlarge her operations, she envied Madame de Maintenon, in the height of absolute power, not the success of her ambitious hypocrisy, not the mysterious honour of a royal and clandestine union, but the glory of having founded St. Cyr.

Madame Campan had neither the treasures nor the authority of Louis XIV. at her disposal for the realisation of her plans. "A month after the fall of Robe-

[1] Maternal affection prevailed over her religious sentiments; she wished to preserve the wreck of her fortune for her children. Had she deferred this fatal act for one day she would have been saved; the cart which conveyed Robespierre to execution stopped her funeral procession!

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spierre," she says, in a most interesting document, "I considered as to the means of providing for myself, for a mother seventy years of age, my sick husband, my child nine years old, and part of my ruined family. I now possessed nothing in the world but an assignat of five hundred francs. I had become responsible for my husband's debts, to the amount of thirty thousand francs. I chose St. Germain to set up a boarding school, for that town did not remind me, as Versailles did, both of happy times and of the misfortunes of France. It was at some distance from Paris, where our dreadful disasters had occurred, and where people resided with whom I did not wish to be acquainted. I took with me a nun of *l'Enfant-Jesus*, to give an unquestionable pledge of my religious principles. The school of St. Germain was the first in which the opening of an oratory was ventured on. The Directory was displeased at it, and ordered it to be immediately shut up. Not having the means of printing my prospectus, I wrote a hundred copies of it, and sent them to those persons of my acquaintance who had survived the dreadful commotions. At the year's end I had sixty pupils; soon afterwards a hundred. I bought furniture, and paid my debts."

The rapid success of the establishment at St. Germain was undoubtedly owing to the talents, experience, and excellent principles of Madame Campan, seconded by public opinion. To cherish and show attention to any person who had been at Court, was to defy and humble the reigning power; and every one knows that people never deny themselves that pleasure in France. I was then very young, but I did not fail to observe that disposition in those about me. All property had changed hands; all ranks found themselves confusedly jumbled by the shock of the Revolution: society resembled a library, in which the books have been replaced at random, after tearing off the titles. The great lord dined at the table of the opulent contractor; and the witty and elegant marchioness was present at the ball by the side of the

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clumsy peasant lately grown rich. In the absence of the ancient distinctions, elegant manners and polished language now formed an extraordinary kind of aristocracy. The house of St. Germain, conducted by a lady who possessed the deportment and the habits of the best society, was not only a school of knowledge, but a school of the world.

"A friend of Madame de Beauharnais," continued Madame Campan, "brought me her daughter Hortense de Beauharnais, and her niece Emilie de Beauharnais. Six months afterwards she came to inform me of her marriage with a Corsican gentleman, who had been brought up in the military school, and was then a general. I was requested to communicate this information to her daughter, who long lamented her mother's change of name.

"I was also desired to watch over the education of little Eugéne de Beauharnais, who was placed at St. Germain, in the same school with my son.

"A great intimacy sprang up between my nieces and these young people. Madame de Beauharnais set out for Italy, and left her children with me. On her return, after the conquests of Bonaparte, that general, much pleased with the improvement of his step-daughter, invited me to dine at Malmaison, and attended two representations of *Esther* at my school."

Never had the establishment at St. Germain been in a more flourishing condition than at this time (1802-3). What more could Madame Campan wish for? Her fortune was respectable; her occupation and duties agreeable to her taste. Absolute in her own house, she seemed also safe from the caprice of power. But the man who then disposed of the fate of France and Europe was soon to determine otherwise.

After the battle of Austerlitz the State undertook, to bring up, at the public expense, the sisters, daughters or nieces of those who were decorated with the Cross of Honour. The children of the warriors killed or wounded in glorious battle were to find paternal care in the ancient

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abodes of the Montmorencys and the Condés. Accustomed to concentrate around him all superior talents, fearless himself of superiority, Napoleon sought for a person qualified by experience and abilities to conduct the institution of Écouen: he selected Madame Campan.

She was now to reap the fruits of ten years' experience at St. Germain. The establishment of Écouen had to be created, and Madame Campan commenced this great undertaking. Count Lacepède, the pupil, friend, and rival of Buffon, then Grand Chancellor of the Legion of Honour, assisted her with his enlightened advice. Napoleon, who could descend with ease from the highest political subjects to the examination of the most minute details; and who was as much at home in inspecting a boarding school for young ladies as in reviewing the grenadiers of his guard; whom it was impossible to deceive, and who was not unwilling to find fault when he visited the establishment at Écouen, was forced to say, "*It is all right.*"[1]

A second house was formed at St. Denis, on the model of that of Écouen. Perhaps Madame Campan might have hoped for a title to which her long labours gave her a right; perhaps the superintendence of the two houses would have been but the fair recompense of her services; but her fortunate years had passed: her fate was now to depend on the most important events. Napoleon had accumulated such a mass of power as no one but himself in Europe could overturn. France, content with thirty years of victories, in vain asked for peace and repose. The army which had triumphed in the sands of Egypt, on the summits of the Alps, and in the marshes of Holland, was to perish amidst the snows of Russia. Nations combined against a single man. The territory of

[1] Napoleon had wished to be informed of every particular of the furniture, government, and order of the house, the instruction and education of the pupils. The internal regulations were submitted to him. One of the intended rules, drawn up by Madame Campan, proposed that the children should hear mass on Sundays and Thursdays. Napoleon himself wrote on the margin, *every day.*

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France was invaded. The orphans of Écouen, from the windows of the mansion which served as their asylum, saw in the distant plain the fires of the Russian bivouacs, and once more wept the deaths of their fathers. Paris capitulated. France hailed the return of the descendants of Henry IV.; they reascended the throne so long filled by their ancestors, which the wisdom of an enlightened prince established on the empire of the laws.

This moment, which diffused joy amongst the faithful servants of the royal family, and brought them the rewards of their devotion, proved to Madame Campan a period of bitter vexation. The hatred of her enemies had revived. The suppression of the school at Écouen had deprived her of her position; the most absurd calumnies followed her into her retreat; her attachment to the Queen was suspected; she was accused not only of ingratitude but of perfidy. The object of such calumnies is Madame Campan, in whose favour Marie Antoinette wrote in 1792 a testamentary disposition, extremely honourable to the devotion of the subject and to the goodness of the sovereign. It is Madame Campan to whom Louis XVI. in 1792 confided the most secret and dangerous papers; for whom Louis XVI., in the cell of the Feuillans, on the 10th of August 1792, cut off two locks of his hair, giving her one for herself, another for her sister, whilst the Queen, throwing her arms about their necks by turns, said to them: "Unhappy women, you are unfortunate only on my account: I am still more wretched than you." Slander has little effect on youth, but in the decline of life its darts are envenomed with a mortal poison. The wounds which Madame Campan had received were deep. Her sister, Madame Auguié, had destroyed herself; M. Rousseau, her brother-in-law, had perished a victim of the reign of terror. In 1813 a dreadful accident had deprived her of her niece, Madame de Broc, one of the most amiable and interesting beings that ever adorned the earth. Madame Campan seemed destined to behold those whom she loved go down to the grave before her.

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In the cemetery of Père la Chaise, amongst those ostentatious mausoleums, generally loaded with lying epitaphs, is a modest grave on which she has often been seen to weep. No marble decorates it; no inscription is read upon it; it is remarkable chiefly for its simplicity; the undulating turf giving the only clue to the secret of the tomb.

After so many troubles Madame Campan sought a peaceful retreat. Paris had become odious to her. She paid a visit to one of her most beloved pupils, Mademoiselle Crouzet, who had married a physician at Mantes, a man of talent, distinguished for his intelligence, frankness, and cordiality.[1] Mantes is a pleasant cheerful residence, and the idea of an abode there pleased her. A few intimate friends formed a pleasant society, and she enjoyed a little tranquillity after so many disturbances. The revisal of her Memoirs, the arrangement of the interesting anecdotes of which her Recollections were to consist, alone diverted her mind from the one powerful sentiment which attached her to life. She lived only for her son. M. Campan deserved the tenderness of his mother. No sacrifice had been spared for his education. After having pursued that course of study, which, under the Imperial Government, produced men of such distinguished merit, he was waiting till time and circumstances should afford him an opportunity of devoting his services to his country. Although the state of his health was far from good, it did not threaten any rapid or premature decay; he was, however, after a few days' illness, suddenly taken from his family. "I never witnessed so heartrending a scene," M. Maigne says, "as that which took place when Marshal Ney's lady, her niece, and Madame Pannelier, her sister, came to acquaint her with this misfortune. When they entered her apartment she was in bed. All three at once uttered a piercing cry. The two ladies threw themselves on their

[1] M. Maigne, physician to the infirmaries at Mantes. Madame Campan found in him a friend and comforter, of whose merit and affection she knew the value.

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knees, and kissed her hands, which they bedewed with tears. Before they could speak to her she read in their faces that she no longer possessed a son. At that instant her large eyes, opening wildly, seemed to wander. Her face grew pale, her features changed, her lips lost their colour, she struggled to speak, but uttered only inarticulate sounds, accompanied by piercing cries. Her gestures were wild, her reason was suspended. Every part of her being was in agony. Her respiration scarcely sufficed for the efforts which this unhappy mother made to express her grief, and give vent to her sufferings. To this state of anguish and despair no calm succeeded, until her tears began to flow. Friendship and the tenderest cares succeeded for a moment in calming her grief, but not in diminishing its power. This violent crisis had disturbed her whole organisation. A cruel disorder, which required a still more cruel operation, soon manifested itself. The presence of her family, a tour which she made in Switzerland, a residence at the waters of Baden, and, above all, the sight, the tender and charming conversation of a person by whom she was affectionately beloved, occasionally diverted her mind, and in a slight degree relieved her suffering." She underwent a serious operation, performed with extraordinary promptitude and the most complete success. No unfavourable symptoms appeared; Madame Campan was thought to be restored to her friends: but the disorder was in the blood; it took another course; the chest became affected. "From that moment," says M. Maigne, who watched her malady with all the solicitude of friendship, "I could never look on Madame Campan as living; she herself felt that she belonged no more to this world."

"My friend," she said to her physician the day before her death, "I am attached to the simplicity of religion. I hate all that savours of fanaticism." When her codicil was presented for her signature, her hand trembled; "It would be a pity," she said, "to stop when so fairly on the road."

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Her friends witnessed her decease on the 16th of March 1822. The cheerfulness she displayed throughout her malady had nothing affected in it. Her character was naturally powerful and elevated. At the approach of death she evinced the soul of a sage, without abandoning for an instant her feminine character.

One profound sentiment, her attachment to the Queen —one constant study, the education of youth, occupied her whole life. Napoleon once said to her, "The old systems of education were good for nothing; what do young women stand in need of, to be well brought up in France?"—"Of *mothers*," answered Madame Campan. "It is well said," replied Napoleon. "Well, Madame, let the French be indebted to you for bringing up mothers for their children."

Surrounded by pupils to whom her conversation was a delight, she talked to them of the duties of their sex, or of the most interesting facts in history. Sometimes her judicious and keen understanding would draw a salutary lesson from a little amusing story. In past events she often sought traits calculated to enlighten their minds and elevate their sentiments. I call on all the pupils of Écouen to bear witness how often she spoke to them of Louis IX., of Charles V., of Louis XII., of Henry IV., in particular, and of the virtues with which they and their successors had adorned the throne. When she came to the stormy period of the Revolution, she would explain to them the outrages committed against disarmed royalty tell them of the descendants of kings living in a foreign land, of Louis XVI. and his misfortunes, of the Queen and the afflictions she had been made to endure. These recitals affected their young hearts. When they heard her talk of the royal family of France, the daughters of Napoleon's warriors learned the respect that should be paid to calamity, and the gratitude due for benefits received.

Beyond the walls of the mansion of Écouen, in the village which surrounds it, Madame Campan had taken a small house where she loved to pass a few hours in

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solitary retirement. There, at liberty to abandon herself to the memory of the past, the superintendent of the imperial establishment became, once more, for the moment, the first lady of the chamber to Marie Antoinette. To the few friends whom she admitted into this retreat she would show, with emotion, a plain muslin gown which the Queen had worn, and which was made from a part of Tippoo Saib's present. A cup, out of which Marie Antoinette had drunk; a writing stand, which she had long used, were, in her eyes, of inestimable value; and she has often been discovered sitting, in tears, before the picture which represented her royal mistress.

"Pardon me, august shade! unhappy Queen, pardon me," she says, in a fragment I have preserved in her handwriting; "thy portrait is near me whilst I am writing these words. My imagination, impressed with the remembrance of thy sorrows, every instant directs my eyes to those features which I wish to animate, and to read in them whether I am doing service to thy memory in writing this work. When I look at that noble head, which fell by the fury of barbarians, tears fill my eyes, and suspend my narration. Yes, I will speak the truth, by which thy shade can never be injured; truth must prove favourable to her whom falsehood so cruelly wronged."

F. BARRIÈRE.

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NOTES OF CONVERSATIONS WITH MADAME CAMPAN,

WITH OCCASIONAL ANECDOTES OF NAPOLEON.

By M. Maigne.

About the end of 1815 I saw Madame Campan for the first time. She then resided in Paris, in the Rue Saint Lazare.

The misfortunes with which she and her family were just then visited rendered her longer residence in the French capital so unpleasant that she resolved to retire into the country. Though this determination accorded with her slender fortune, yet she was unwilling to withdraw herself too far from the centre of public affairs. She wished still to be within the sphere of the political events of the day; and she was also anxious that her family and numerous friends might be enabled to visit her with facility. She therefore made choice of the little town of Mantes. Madame Maigne, whom she had educated, who had acted as her secretary at Écouen, and to whom she was tenderly attached, had resided at Mantes for the space of three years, a circumstance which materially influenced Madame Campan in giving the preference to that town, and I was sincerely glad of it. About the beginning of April 1816 she came to fix her abode among us.

From that period to the time when she was snatched from us I enjoyed the happiness of seeing her twice

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every day, and I always took leave of her with increased regret; such was the delight which her charming and varied conversation afforded me. Madame la Maréchale de Beauvau observed that no one knew better how to kill time than Madame Campan.

"At the time," Madame Campan told us, "when "Mesmer made so much noise in Paris with his magnetism, "M. Campan, my husband, was his partisan, like almost "every person who moved in high life. To be magnetised "was then a fashion; nay, it was more, it was absolutely "a rage. In the drawing-rooms nothing was talked of but "the brilliant discovery. There was to be no more dying; "people's heads were turned, and their imaginations heated "in the highest degree. To accomplish this object it was "necessary to bewilder the understanding; and Mesmer, "with his singular language, produced that effect. To put "a stop to the fit of public insanity was the grand diffi- "culty; and it was proposed to have the secret purchased "by the Court. Mesmer fixed his claims at a very extra- "vagant rate. However, he was offered fifty thousand "crowns. By a singular chance, I was one day led into the "midst of the somnambulists. Such was the enthusiasm "of the numerous spectators that in most of them I could "observe a wild rolling of the eye, and a convulsed move- "ment of the countenance. A stranger might have fancied "himself amidst the unfortunate patients of Charenton. "Surprised and shocked at seeing so many people almost "in a state of delirium, I withdrew, full of reflections on the "scene which I had just witnessed. It happened that "about this time my husband was attacked with a pul- "monary disorder, and he desired that he might be con- "veyed to Mesmer's house. Being introduced into the "apartment occupied by M. Campan, I asked the worker "of miracles what treatment he proposed to adopt; he "very coolly replied, that to ensure a speedy and perfect "cure it would be necessary to lay in the bed of the "invalid, at his left side, one of three things—namely, a "young woman of brown complexion, a black hen, or

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"an empty bottle. 'Sir,' said I, 'if the choice be a matter "of indifference, pray try the empty bottle.'

"M. Campan's side grew worse; he experienced a "difficulty of breathing, and a pain in his chest. All the "magnetic remedies that were employed produced no "effect. Perceiving his failure, Mesmer took advantage of "the periods of my absence to bleed and blister the patient. "I was not informed of what had been done until after "M. Campan's recovery. Mesmer was asked for a cer- "tificate to prove that the patient had been cured by means "of magnetism only, and he gave it. Here was a trait of "enthusiasm! Truth was no longer respected. When I "next presented myself to the Queen, their Majesties "asked what I thought of Mesmer's discovery. I in- "formed them of what had taken place, earnestly express- "ing my indignation at the conduct of the barefaced "quack. It was immediately determined to have nothing "more to do with him."

The following anecdotes are put together without regard to order. It would, indeed, have been impossible to preserve any regular arrangement.

During the Consulate, Napoleon, one day after dinner, stood leaning against the drawing-room chimneypiece, in a very meditative attitude. A lady, one of his relatives, observing him, said, "You look like a conspirator." "True," he replied, "I am now conspiring against the monarchs of Europe. Time will show that a shrug of the shoulders is sufficient to overthrow a bad political system."

A lady asked Madame Campan, during her residence at Mantes, to recommend her to a good confessor. Madame Campan mentioned her own, who, she observed, was a man of intelligence and respectability. "But, madame," inquired the lady, "is he a reasonable man?" —"Oh, very much so," said Madame Campan, "he was

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one of the Court abbés."—"Then he is just the man to suit me," said the lady.

At the time when Napoleon was commander-in-chief of the army of Italy, his sisters and younger brother, together with the children of Josephine, were at school at Saint Germain. During the summer they occasionally paid a visit to Paris, accompanied by Madame Voisin. One evening, to finish their holiday, they proposed going to the theatre, and being short of money, they were obliged to mount into the gallery.

Madame Campan, while she was at Mantes, frequently dwelt on the extraordinary occurrences brought about by chance. "I was," said she, "the instructress of a nest of "kings and queens, without ever dreaming of such a "thing; and, indeed, it was very fortunate for all parties "that we did not know it. Their education was the "same as that of my other pupils. There was no dis- "tinction observed among them. When they quitted me "they were all possessed of an excellent stock of informa- "tion, with the exception of one only, who, though gifted "with a fine understanding, never evinced a willingness "to learn. Had these young women been educated as "queens, they would have been flattered instead of "instructed. Being ignorant of their future destiny, they "received the accomplishments of women of distinction, "added to the more solid acquirements requisite to form "good mistresses of families."

"At the period when the priests were again per- "mitted to say mass during the Revolution, the churches "were found to have been stripped of everything. I pro- "vided some fine lawn for the Church of Saint Germain. "At the time of the confirmation, I directed those of my "pupils who were most abundantly supplied with money, "to purchase a sufficient quantity of lawn, cambric, lace, "etc., to make surplices and albs. After the religious "ceremony, they were left for the use of the church; and

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" Saint Germain's was, at that period of my glory, one of " the richest churches in France."[1]

In a conversation which Madame Campan had with Napoleon he said: " It is not the poor, but the rich, who require to be looked after in a State. It is the higher ranks who demand attention. If they were not reined in, they would pull down the sovereign in no time. I hold them with a firm hand, and keep them at a due distance, for they are full of ambition. They are pleasant companions, but they have keen appetites. The poor must be protected, or they would be devoured. The higher orders have every advantage in society. Their rank and wealth protect them but too well. The power of the throne is in the lower ranks, and all the dangers that threaten it proceed from the great."

" In 1801 M. Dubreuil, a physician, and Madame " l'Hopital, both inhabitants of St. Germain, were arrested " and conveyed to the Temple; the former for having " felt the pulse of M. de Talon's child, and the latter for " having been visited by M. Dubreuil. Though the last- " mentioned individual lived perfectly retired, his presence " nevertheless gave umbrage to the Government. The " police, artful as it then was, could not find an excuse for " putting him under arrest; but as the principal could not " be got at, the accessories were taken in his stead.

" M. Dubreuil, on being conducted to prison, wrote to " me, requesting that I would exert my influence in his " behalf. He could not, he said, guess the cause of such " a proceeding. I was much interested for M. Dubreuil, " who was my physician and my friend; and I was the " more astonished at his arrest as I well knew his quiet " inoffensive habits and opinions. I immediately repaired " to the Tuileries. As soon as the First Consul beheld

[1] The paragraphs distinguished by inverted commas at the commencement of each line are to be understood as containing the exact words of Madame Campan.

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" me, he said, 'You have come to intercede for the in-
" habitants of St. Germain. Your Madame de l'Hopital
" is an intriguer.'—'I beg pardon, General, she might
" once, perhaps, have been reproached for a little levity;
" but surely that must be all over at the age of seventy-
" eight. An intriguer she cannot be; a little coquetry
" would perhaps be more to her taste, but she is blind.
" She receives company every evening, and through the
" fear of being thought impolite, she makes her courtesy
" even to the absent.'

" When Napoleon was informed of the real circum-
" stances he grew angry, and said, in the presence of
" Josephine, 'A blind woman, seventy-eight years old, is
" always innocent of political offences. The minister has
" committed an act of cruelty, unworthy of my Govern-
" ment. Had Fouché been plotting with my enemies, he
" could not have done better. He must be mad. I can-
" not permit such proceedings to take place under the
" sanction of my authority. It is my wish that every
" act emanating from my power should be such as reason
" will approve. A Government should be actuated by
" exalted views and generous sentiments. The arbitrary
" act that has just been committed, is worthy only of a
" sovereign's mistress in a fit of passion. Matters must
" not go on in this way. The head of the State should
" never be biassed by passion. History will record every-
" thing, and what will be said of such conduct as this?
" But what has the doctor done?'—'Why, General, he
" attended M. de Talon's child, and he has, for many
" years past, daily visited his fellow-prisoner in the Temple.'
" 'This business is almost incredible,' resumed Napoleon.
" 'A doctor may surely prescribe for my enemies as well
" as for my friends, without giving offence to the ministry.
" Medical professors are not, like the holders of Govern-
" ment places, required to embrace a particular set of
" opinions.

" 'Abuses like this degrade and compromise my autho-
" rity. I must have some conversation with the minister,

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" and the prisoners shall be liberated.' He rang the bell " with violence, and sent for Fouché, who received a " severe reprimand. However, the prisoners were not set " at liberty until thirty hours after this conversation ; such " was the tardiness with which the minister went through " the formalities necessary for procuring their release. " One of Josephine's carriages was sent to convey them " from the Temple ; on hearing which, Madame de " l'Hopital exclaimed, 'Are these Madame Buonaparte's " beautiful white horses?'—'It matters very little, Ma- " dame, whether they be white or black,' said M. Dubreuil " peevishly, 'so that they draw us out of prison.'"

During the hundred days Napoleon observed that nobility, inflated as it is with pride and ambition, is not a very manageable commodity. " In 1806," said he, " the Emperor Alexander thought me too happy in having none. The nobility was a trouble of my own creating, I should have made a nobleman of every individual paying fifty francs of taxes. This would have levelled a blow at the very roots of the old nobility, and the new nobles would have been less arrogant. My plans did not answer the ends I had in view. I wished for splendour, and I got nothing but vexation, through the avarice and ambition of those whom I elevated."

" The *counts* of his making," added Madame Campan, " were worth the *counting*;[1] they were the work of a " master-hand."

Napoleon observed, that if he could fairly fight public opinion, he should not fear it. But as it could not be beaten down by his artillery, he found himself obliged to conciliate it by justice and equity, two powers by which it is always to be won. To pursue any other course is to endanger wealth and distinction. It is impossible to imprison public opinion: restraint serves only to irritate

[1] " Les comtes de sa façon, ne se croyaient pas de contes pour rire. Il faut convenir qu'ils sont du fait d'un grand homme."

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it. "Public opinion," added Madame Campan, "may be "compared to an eel: the tighter one holds it, the sooner "it escapes."

Napoleon likewise said:—"Revolutions are brought about only by injustice. Where would be the motive for them if governments were guided solely by the laws of equity? All revolutions, past and to come, must be attributed to injustice, and I defy the most artful politician to assign any other cause for them. In the object of the French Revolution there was nothing to condemn; all the mischief consisted in the excesses committed by misguided men. It is necessary to bear in mind these two facts, lest we should confound justice on the one hand, and iniquity on the other. What! must a man trace back his pedigree for fourteen centuries before he can be deemed worthy of respect? Before the Revolution it was necessary to be a nobleman to hold a commission in the army; and to be connected with a great family to obtain a bishopric. The Revolution was brought about by the nobility and the high clergy. That's a fact of which I am thoroughly convinced."

Madame Campan often told me she had heard from Napoleon that when he founded the convent of the Sisters of la Charité he was urgently solicited to permit perpetual vows. He, however, refused to do so, on the ground that tastes may change, and that he did not see the necessity of excluding from the world women who might some time or other return to it, and become useful members of society. "Nunneries," he added, "assail the very roots of population. It is impossible to calculate the loss which a nation sustains in having ten thousand women shut up in cloisters. War does but little mischief; for the number of males is at least one-twenty-fifth greater than that of females. Women may, if they please, be allowed to make perpetual vows at fifty years of age; for then their task is fulfilled."

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"During the Directory the Government had ordered "my chapel to be closed; and sometime after commis- "sioners were sent to desire that the reading of the "Scriptures should be suppressed in my school. I in- "quired what books were to be substituted in their stead. "After some minutes' conversation, they observed: 'Citi- "zeness, you are arguing after the old fashion; no reflec- "tions. The nation commands; we must have obedience, "and no reasoning.'"

On the 19th of March 1815 a number of papers were left in the King's closet. Napoleon ordered them to be examined, and among them was found the letter written by Madame Campan to Louis XVIII., immediately after the first restoration. In this letter she enumerated the contents of the portfolio which Louis XVI. had placed under her care. When Napoleon read this letter, he said, "Let it be sent to the office of Foreign Affairs, it is an historical document."

Napoleon, conversing one day with Madame Campan at the Tuileries, said, "I acknowledge no other titles than those which belong to personal merit; they who do not possess such distinctions are truly unfortunate. The men by whom I am surrounded have won their titles on the field of honour; they have given sufficient proofs of their merit; true nobility is in their mind, and nowhere else. I have espoused no party. Merit determines my choice. I am the patron of talent."

Madame Murat one day said to Madame Campan: "I am astonished that you are not more awed in our presence; you speak to us with as much familiarity as when we were your pupils!"—"The best thing you can do," replied Madame Campan, "is to forget your titles when you are "with me; for I can never be afraid of queens whom I "have held under the rod."

Talma and his brother-in-law dined with Madame Campan on their return from Rouen in 1821. She was

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delighted at the idea of seeing and conversing with so distinguished a man as Talma. Her countenance beamed with joy at the pleasure she anticipated. "I still retain," said she, "a taste for the truly beautiful. In spite of all "my misfortunes my spirits will be revived and refreshed "to-day. I require to be roused now and then from the "dejection into which events have plunged me."

During dinner Madame Campan turned the conversation on the art of elocution; and Talma made some remarks on the subject which arrested the attention of all present. "Good delivery," he said, "is applicable to every class of composition. This art, notwithstanding the powerful effects it produces, is but too much neglected in France. It is indeed quite in its infancy with us. It forms no part of education, and is never thought of in our academies. Yet it presents so many advantages, that I cannot conceive how it should be lost sight of. What effect can even a clever speaker produce without good delivery? He merely fatigues his hearers. I could name several men of high merit in the legislature who are intolerable on account of their delivery; and similar examples may be found in the pulpit and at the bar. The sermons and speeches of some of our most celebrated preachers and advocates have occasionally dissatisfied me, owing to a want of just harmony between their mental and physical powers. When the mind of the speaker was deeply impressed with the truths he was expounding, he would betray no external signs of conviction; no change would be observable in his features, nor would his voice soften into the accents of persuasion. In Paris party spirit establishes the fame of public speakers; but people of judgment form their opinions differently from the loungers of the drawing-room.

"The difficulties which the actor has to surmount are greater than those which present themselves to the public orator. The latter has to express only his own ideas; when he speaks in public it is always in his own character. But the actor is obliged to model his mind,

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and even his body, according to the received notion of the character and manner of the individual he has to represent.

"How else would it be possible to portray vehement passions, enormous vices, and exalted virtues, or to develop the distinctive traits belonging to different characters? The actor is obliged, as it were, to seize the spirit of the individual he has to represent, in order that he may produce a living personification of one of whom no other trace remains on earth save a few lines recorded by the pen of history. This task, I may truly say, demands vast perseverance and study.

"Any dissonance between the thought, the look, and the gesture destroys the illusion, and defeats all chance of success. The countenance should be a mirror, reflecting distinctly all that passes in the mind; the voice, that powerful medium for the communication of impressions, should be clear, flexible, and sonorous, capable of expressing every feeling of the heart. The movements of the body should follow the same impulse; and the spectator should recognise, in the harmony of the representation, the perfect identity of the individual personified."

I was informed by Madame Campan that a female relative of the Empress Josephine received a letter from an uncle, residing at a distance from Paris, soliciting a place for one of his relations, with the remark that one was bound in *honour* and in *affection* to *remember one's family*. Madame Campan observed that Napoleon's heart was too full of family affection. He wished his relations to share the good fortune which he himself possessed; and this great ambition for his family gave umbrage to Europe. Had he been an only son, his affairs would probably have taken a different turn.

In 1814, when Masséna was presented at Court, or when he went to take leave of the King, on departing for his command at Marseilles, the great personages by whom

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his Majesty was surrounded cleared but very narrow space for him to pass through. He had no sooner delivered a few words than he found himself without the circle. Massena was continually alluding to the clever way in which they cut him off, and separated him from the King. "When I was on the field of battle," said he, "I did not employ so much dexterity in making my prisoners." "Courtiers," observed Madame Campan, "have a paramount interest in rendering the person of "the sovereign inaccessible; so that every favour may "fall upon themselves. They are a class of men who "very well understand their own interests."

About the period of Madame Murat's marriage, and while she was yet at Saint Germain, Napoleon observed to Madame Campan: "I do not like those love matches between young people whose brains are excited by the flames of the imagination. I had other views for my sister. Who knows what high alliance I might have procured for her! She is thoughtless, and does not form a just notion of my situation. The time will come when, perhaps, sovereigns might dispute for her hand. She is about to marry a brave man; but in my situation that is not enough. Fate should be left to fulfil her decrees."

On one occasion Madame Campan related to me the following particulars:—"A few days after the battle of "Paris the Emperor Alexander came to visit Écouen, and "he did me the honour to breakfast with me. After "showing him over the establishment I conducted him to "the park, the most elevated point of which overlooked "the plain of Saint Denis. 'Sire,' said I, 'from this point "I saw the battle of Paris.' 'If,' replied the Emperor, 'that "battle had lasted two hours longer we should not have "had a single cartridge at our disposal. We feared that "we had been betrayed; for on arriving so precipitately "before Paris all our plans were laid, and we did not "expect the firm resistance we experienced.' I next

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Paris Richard Bentley and Son. 1883

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"conducted the Emperor to the chapel, and showed him "the seats occupied by *le connétable* (the constable) of "Montmorency, and *la connétable* (the constable's lady), "when they went to hear mass. 'Barbarians like us,' "observed the Emperor, 'would say *la connétable and le* "*connétable*.'

"The Emperor inquired into the most minute "particulars respecting the establishment of Écouen, "and I felt great pleasure in answering his questions. "I recollect having dwelt on several points which "appeared to me to be very important, and which were "in their spirit hostile to aristocratic principles. For "example, I informed his Majesty that the daughters "of distinguished and wealthy individuals and those of "the humble and obscure were indiscriminately con- "founded together in the establishment. 'If,' said I, 'I "were to observe the least pretension on account of "the rank or fortune of parents I should immediately "put an end to it. The most perfect equality is pre- "served; distinction is awarded only to merit and "industry. The pupils are obliged to cut out and "make all their own clothes. They are taught to clean "and mend lace; and two at a time, they by turns, three "times a week, cook and distribute victuals to the poor of "the village. The young girls who have been brought "up at Écouen, or in my boarding-school at Saint Ger- "main, are thoroughly acquainted with everything relating "to household business, and they are grateful to me for "having made that a part of their education. In my "conversations with them I have always taught them "that on domestic management depends the preservation "or dissipation of their fortunes.'

"The postmaster of Écouen was in the courtyard at "the moment when the Emperor, as he stepped into his "carriage, told me he would send some sweetmeats for "the pupils. I immediately communicated to them the "intelligence, which was joyfully received; but the sweet- "meats were looked for in vain. When Alexander set

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"out for England he changed horses at Écouen, and the "postmaster said to him: 'Sire, the pupils of Écouen "are still expecting the sweetmeats which your Majesty "promised them.' To which the Emperor replied that "he had directed Saken to send them. The Cossacks "had most likely devoured the sweetmeats, and the poor "little girls, who had been so highly flattered by the "promise, never tasted them."

"Prince Talleyrand, in a remarkable speech which he "delivered in the Chamber of Deputies in 1821, ex- "pressed, in a single phrase, the whole spirit of policy. "'I know,' said he, 'where there is more wisdom than in "Napoleon, or Voltaire, or in any minister, present or "future: it is in public opinion.' I was struck with the "justice of these few words. They told more than a "whole treatise on the subject. What is the resting- "point of policy? Public opinion. Has it any other "basis? Surely reason admits of no other. What should "we think of the minister who follows any other guide? "Silence may be commanded, it is true; but events will "run counter to that command. Public opinion cannot "be controlled. It must be followed, for it is always "advancing. The brilliant light of the torch may be "dimmed, but it cannot be extinguished. It is not to be "found in the sneers of Court ladies, nor in the breviary "of the Jesuits. Observe the conduct of a selfish politician, "he seeks every opportunity to consult the favour of those "in power. He is satisfied if he can give proofs of his "devotedness; no matter on what conditions."

"I have been asked, by many persons, whether I "have not been engaged in writing Memoirs on Napoleon "and his Court.[1] My answer has been that this task is "reserved for those who lived in his household, or who "had frequent access to him; that I had undertaken to

[1] The reader is referred for one of the best books on this subject to the *Memoirs of Madame Junot* (*Duchesse d'Abrantès*).

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"describe the private life of Marie Antoinette, and that "I should do no more. I never made a single memo- "randum relative to the splendid and martial Court which "Napoleon held at the Tuileries."

In the course of conversation with me, Madame Campan also made the following remarks:—"Napoleon's "genius elevated him; but his temper proved his ruin. "A restless, ambitious, reserved and hasty temper, united "with imperial power, was naturally calculated to give "offence to those who approached him. Human vanity "is a delicate string, which should be touched with the "greatest caution. Napoleon conceived that his vast "power exempted him from the forms which engage the "love of subjects and call forth sentiments of attachment. "He seemed to think that he was sufficient to himself, "and the many imperfections which he observed in man- "kind rendered him somewhat misanthropic. This dis- "position caused him to feel the ingratitude of many "persons, because he mortified their vanity; and the "vanity of the great, when it is once wounded, never "forgives. He knew how to govern his subjects, and "Europe; but he could never govern himself; so true "it is that all great men have a weak point. He was "brave, generous, and magnanimous, and prized glory "beyond all things; but, unfortunately, he could never "conquer his passions. His luminous understanding had "no influence on his temper. His genius gained him "admirers; but his neglect of forms made him enemies. "His admirers were far from his person, and his enemies "were about him. A lady of the Imperial Court re- "marked that Napoleon was a piece of patchwork, made "up of parts of a great and a common man. He wished "that women should attend to their family affairs, and "not interfere with politics. The influence of the mis- "tresses of Louis XV. alarmed him. He thought women "might be commanded like an army. He little knew "their restless, insinuating, inquisitive, and persevering "spirit, and the direct influence they exercise over their

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"husbands. He did not seem to understand women; "they never relinquish their privileges."

As Madame Campan was returning from Switzerland she paid a visit to a duchess,[1] who had been educated at Saint Germain, and who addressed the following remarks to her:—"I never enjoyed so much happiness as since I have returned to my country residence. I have forgotten my title since I have retired hither, and I have not been the same creature that I was before. My head was full of chimerical fancies. The title of baron begins to disorder the mind; that of count produces a certain degree of imbecility; and a dukedom absolutely turns the brain. I know not what effect higher distinctions produce; but I suppose they complete the moral derangement. This progression is exact, and the result positive. All whom I have known to possess titles have experienced the same fate as myself. I pity them if they have not had courage to resume possession of their reason."

"These observations," said Madame Campan, "showed "a justness of thinking which pleased me exceedingly. "There appeared to me to be more philosophy in these "few words than I have met with in the arguments of "most of the men who profess themselves to be the "disciples of Socrates. What is there in a title? It "serves only to feed and inflate human vanity. This "system of distinction, which is the original sin of politics; "this food of vanity, so disgusting to the understanding, "gives rise to pretensions of superiority over men who do "not possess titles, or who only possess them in a lower "degree. Can anything be more absurd and ridiculous "than to suppose that the nicknames of baron, count, "etc., afford grounds for assuming advantages over other "men? This is madness, pure madness. On this "subject Mirabeau said, 'Two things are necessary to "make a citizen a nobleman: first, that he should declare "himself to be so; and next, that those to whom he

[1] The Duchesse de St. Leu, at Constance.

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"makes the declaration should be willing to believe him. "Were it not for these two conditions, nobility would "have no existence.' In the time of the Constituent "Assembly this very just observation of Mirabeau's was "repeated throughout Paris."

Madame Campan dined at the Tuileries in company with the Pope's Nuncio, at the period when the Concordat was in agitation. During dinner the First Consul astonished her by the able manner in which he conversed on the subject under discussion. She said he argued so logically that his talent quite amazed her.

"I formerly," said Madame Campan, "enjoyed a high "degree of Court favour. When I was in childbed, "previously to the birth of my poor Henry, four couriers "were waiting at my house in Paris to convey intelli- "gence of my delivery to Versailles. One was sent by "Louis XVI., one by the Queen, one by Monsieur, now "Louis XVIII., and one by the Princesses. Things have "changed since then; such is the course of human affairs. "I knew real happiness only at Saint Germain; and I "have enjoyed tranquillity only since I have lived at "Mantes.

"I have frequently heard the attendants of princely "personages cry out to the people, '*Hats off!*' This is a "piece of folly. These marks of courtesy should be "inspired, not exacted. Confidence is not purchased—it "is given; and, in like manner, respect should be given "and not commanded. When people are happy they do "spontaneously that which under other circumstances "authority must compel. An experienced eye can judge "with rapidity; it never takes a mistaken view of public "opinion."

Molé, the actor, after paying a visit to the Duc de Fronsac on New-Year's Day, met Fleury on the staircase. The latter inquired whether he had been paying his

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court to Monseigneur, to which Molé replied, "Yes, certainly; it cost nothing. I always fancy I am on the stage when I lavish this kind of incense. It is a part to be played like any other."

Madame Campan related to me a fact so extraordinary that I cannot refrain from recording it here. The Marchioness de Forges, whose husband was grand falconer, resided at Versailles in the year 1775. The Marchioness was pregnant, and during childbirth some unpleasant intelligence was communicated to her. If I recollect rightly, she was informed that one of her houses had been burned down. The pains of childbirth immediately ceased, and the Marchioness continued pregnant for the space of twenty-five years. At the expiration of that period she died, and on her body being opened the child was found petrified.

The Abbé B—— one day told Madame Campan that during his residence in Italy he frequently saw in the public streets monks of various orders, mounted on chairs or planks of wood, preaching or holding conferences. When these conferences took place in the churches a Christ, as large as a child, whose head was made to move by means of a spring, was supported by one of the chorister boys, concealed within the pulpit. During these conferences the priests addressed the Christ, and inquired whether he would permit or forgive such or such things; and by help of the spring, which was moved by the boy, the Christ bowed in token of assent, or shook his head by way of disapproval, just as the priest thought proper to determine.

"When M. B—— told us this I said, 'Never repeat "such a story again. I cannot conceive that the clergy "would tolerate things of a nature calculated to turn into "ridicule the most holy of all religions.' 'These facts,' "replied the Abbé, 'are well known to travellers. At "Naples they make St. Januarius weep. I only relate "what I saw.'"

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"On the day after the publication of the ordinance "for the expulsion of the Jesuits, M. Campan, my father-"in-law, met Dr. Quesnay in the grand gallery of Ver-"sailles, and said to him, 'Well, what think you of the "Jesuits?' 'Hush! my friend,' answered M. Quesnay, "'we must not raise the cry of victory yet. Three days "must elapse before a dead man be considered as really "dead; these wicked rogues may come to life again.' "Forty years afterwards the miracle dreaded by the "doctor was fulfilled."

Napoleon used to say that sobriety and continence were indispensable qualities in a military man. Madame Campan quoted this observation, and added a remark made by her nephew, Marshal Ney, when in Spain, to another marshal, who had a mistress: "Such an aide-de-camp as you now possess will cost your army ten thousand men."[1]

A lady, connected with the establishment of Saint Denis, told Madame Campan that Napoleon visited it during the hundred days, and that the pupils were so delighted to see him that they crowded round him, endeavouring to touch his clothes, and evinced the most extravagant demonstrations of joy. The matron endeavoured to silence them; but Napoleon said, "Let them alone; let them alone. This may weaken the head, but it strengthens the heart."

One day during the Consulate Madame Campan dined at Malmaison, and after the coffee had been handed round several members of public bodies gathered about Napoleon, and tried to prevail on him to distrust the Jacobins, as being a very dangerous set of men. After hearing what they had to say, he replied, "It appears to me that you do not rightly know what a Jacobin is. He is merely an

[1] Vide *Memoirs of Madame Junot* (*Duchesse d'Abrantès*), edition 1883, vol. iii., p. 268, for a curious illustrative anecdote of the marshal in question.

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ambitious fellow, in search of a place. I shall therefore give places to the Jacobins, and make them hold their tongues."

"M. Brunier, the Court physician, was called to attend "Madame B—— at Versailles. That distinguished lady "was then far advanced in life, and in a bad state of "health. After considering her case, the doctor jokingly "said, 'What can I do, madame? when the oil is exhausted "the lamp must die out.' 'A physician,' replied the "lady, 'should at least have sufficient sense and humanity "to speak less plainly. I do not want proverbs, but "merely consolation, if there be no other remedy.'

"This same M. Brunier was physician to the children "of the royal family; and during his visits to the palace, "if the death of any of his patients happened to be "alluded to, he never failed to say, 'Ah! there I lost "one of my best friends.' 'Well,' said the Queen, 'if he "loses all his patients, who are his friends, what will "become of those who are not his friends?'"

"A petition was drawn up and addressed to the "Queen by the people of a corporation in the neighbour- "hood of Paris, in which they prayed for the destruction "of the game which destroyed their farming crops. I "was myself the bearer of this petition to her Majesty, "who said to me, 'I will undertake to have these good "people relieved from so burthensome an annoyance.' "She gave the document herself to M. de Vermond, in "my presence, accompanying it with these words, '*I desire* "*that immediate justice be done to this petition.*' An "assurance was given that her order should be attended "to. Six weeks afterwards a second petition was sent "from the corporation; for the nuisance, after all, had "not been abated. Thus are sovereigns deceived!

"I am persuaded," added Madame Campan, "that if "the second petition had reached the Queen, M. de Ver- "mond would have received a sharp reprimand. She

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" was always so happy when it was in her power to do " good."

" Previously to the 10th of August 1792 the Queen " frequently kept me by her bedside, after she had retired, " that we might talk over public events. Her Majesty, " in taking a review of them, used to express a presenti- " ment of their results. 'But, Madame,' said I, 'a door of " escape from this perilous place is pointed out to you— " do not, then, I beseech you, continue here.' 'History is " busy with us,' replied the Queen, 'we neither can nor " ought to accept the offers made to us. Were death " itself the consequence, we cannot consent to be saved " by the men who have possessed themselves of our " authority.' 'Madame,' said I, 'history will take her own " course ; only save yourself and family in the first place.' " The page of history was ever present to the mind of her " Majesty ; so true is it that misfortune is not to be fled " from."

Madame Campan was very much affected whilst relating to me this conversation.

Madame Campan once observed : " A man should be " in the world what a good book is in a library : an object " always seen with interest and pleasure, and from whose " acquaintance we never fail to gain something."

Madame Regnier, the wife of a law officer of Versailles, while talking in the presence of a numerous party assembled at her own house, dropped some remarks which were out of place, though not very important. Her husband reprimanded her before the whole company, saying, " Silence, madame ; you are a fool." She lived twenty or thirty years after this, and never uttered a single word, even to her children. A pretended theft was committed in her presence, in the hope of taking her by surprise, but without effect ; and nothing could induce her to speak. When her consent was requisite for the marriage of any

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of her children, she bowed her head, and signed the contract. Such an instance of resolute obstinacy was never known; her vanity never forgave the affront.

M. de Beaumont, chamberlain to the Empress Josephine, was one day at Malmaison, expressing his regret that M. D——, one of Napoleon's generals, who had recently been promoted, did not belong to a great family. "You mistake, sir," observed Madame Campan, "he is of "very ancient descent; he is one of the nephews of "Charlemagne. All the heroes of our army sprang from "the elder branch of that sovereign's family, who never "emigrated."

When Madame Campan related this circumstance to me, she added: "After the 30th of March 1814 some "officers of the army of Condé presumed to say to certain "French marshals that it was a pity they were not more "nobly connected. In answer to this one of them said, "'True nobility, gentlemen, consists in giving proofs of it. "The field of honour has witnessed ours; but where are "we to look for yours? Your swords have rusted in their "scabbards. Our laurels may well excite envy; we have "earned them nobly, and we owe them solely to our "valour. You have merely inherited a name. This is "the distinction between us.'"[1]

Napoleon used to observe that if he had had two such field-marshals as Suchet in Spain he would have not only conquered but kept the Peninsula. Suchet's sound judgment, his governing yet conciliating spirit, his military tact, and his bravery, had procured him astonishing success. "It is to be regretted," added he, "that a sovereign cannot *improvise* men of his stamp."[2]

[1] When one of the princes of the smaller German States was showing Marshal Lannes, with a contemptuous superiority of manner but ill concealed, the portraits of his ancestors, and covertly alluding to the absence of Lannes's, that general turned the tables on him by haughtily remarking, "But I *am* an ancestor."

[2] Apropos of the merits of his various generals, Napoleon said:

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"In the summer of 1811 Napoleon, accompanied by "Maria Louisa and several personages of distinction, "visited the establishment at Ecouen. After inspecting "the chapel and the refectories Napoleon desired that "the three principal pupils might be presented to him. "'Sire,' said I, 'I cannot select three; I must present six.' "He turned on his heel and repaired to the platform, "where, after seeing all the classes assembled, he repeated "his demand. 'Sire,' said I, 'I beg leave to inform your "Majesty that I should commit an injustice towards "several other pupils who are as far advanced as those "whom I might have the honour to present to you.'

"Berthier and others intimated to me, in a low tone "of voice, that I should get into disgrace by my non-"compliance. Napoleon looked over the whole of the "house, entered into the most trivial details, and after "addressing questions to several of the pupils: 'Well, "madame,' said he, 'I am satisfied; show me your six best "pupils.'" Madame Campan presented them to him; and as he stepped into his carriage, he desired that their names might be sent to Berthier. On addressing the list to the Prince de Neufchâtel, Madame Campan added to it the names of four other pupils, and all the ten obtained a pension of 300 francs. During the three hours which this visit occupied the Empress did not utter a single word.

During the Consulate Napoleon one day said to Madame Campan, "If ever I establish a republic of women, I shall make you First Consul."

Josephine having been invited, during the Consulate, to dine with a rich army contractor, Napoleon said, "I do not object to your dining with bankers, they are merely

"I give the preference to Suchet. Before his time Masséna was the first; but he may be considered as dead. Suchet, Clausel, and Gérard are now in my opinion the best French generals."—Napoleon's words at St. Helena, quoted in *Madame Junot's (Duchesse d'Abrantès) Memoirs*, edition 1883, vol. iii., p. 291.

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dealers in money ; but I will not have you visit contractors, for they are robbers of money."

Madame Campan has many times told me that Marshal Ney, just at the moment when the battle of the Moskowa was decided, sent to request of Napoleon the whole reserve of the guard. Napoleon inquired of the aide-de-camp whether the Russian guard had yet engaged ; he was told that they had, and had been beaten by the troops of the line. "In that case," replied he, "it will be a finer thing to be able to say in the bulletin that the battle was gained without my reserve having been brought into action."

Marshal Ney had made this request with a view to cut off the retreat of the Russians ; and had the reserve marched forward, it is probable that nearly the whole of their army would have been made prisoners, and that a treaty might have been arranged on the field of battle.

It was an oft-quoted saying of Napoleon's, that if you but scratched the skin of a Russian, you would instantly discern the barbarian.

"The talent of Madame de Staël," said Madame Campan, "gave her a masculine character. To silence "her, it would have been necessary, as I told the Empress "Josephine, to give her a Court dress with a long train ; "she would have sought no better. The man who per- "secuted her was at first her hero ; her brilliant imagina- "tion exalted him into an idol. Napoleon feared her at "home ; but she did him a great deal more mischief "abroad. Under his own wing he might have kept her "in check ; but when vexed and irritated she avenged "herself with the bitterness that might be expected from "a woman of superior talent wounded to the quick. A "woman who can write manifestoes is worthy of consi- "deration ; indeed, policy renders it a duty to respect her. "Napoleon one day interrupted Madame de Staël in the

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"midst of a profound political argument to ask her "whether she had nursed her children."

Napoleon was relating at the Tuileries, after his return from Austerlitz, that he could have made the two Emperors his prisoners in that battle. "Why did you not bring them with you?" said a princess to him, "we could have entertained them with the carnival." "In sooth," was the reply, "such prisoners are apt to create too much embarrassment."

He said on another occasion that his conscripts when they quitted their homes wore only the cloak of courage; but that after they had faced the enemy once or twice their hearts were filled with it.

"From the situation in which I am placed," said Napoleon to Madame Campan, "I very much pity all who are about me. Their characters are all known to me; and I could make a report of them just as you report the conduct of the scholars under your superintendence. Ambition is their ruling passion. All is right that promotes their advancement, but all is wrong that tends to their retrogression. Their pride is very elastic; their ingenuity enables them to lengthen or shorten it as circumstances require. But I keep them within due bounds. They look only to themselves, and they forget the nation, which is the first principle. What would they be without it? The favours of which I dispose belong to the people; but the men who are enjoying them would not scruple to show their ingratitude to the nation and to me if temptation should present itself."

"It must be confessed," said Madame Campan, "that "he judged correctly."

Napoleon related that a few days before the battle of Austerlitz some agitation had prevailed, particularly in Paris. "The warmth of the Court party," said he, "had

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fallen to temperate; but on hearing of my success they rallied round me as if they had been charged by the Cossacks. This is the way of the world."

"If," said Napoleon, "I created so many princes and kings, it was that I might present to the world a specimen of my power. I should have acted very differently but for the reverses I experienced at Moscow. To have kept the English in subjection for three or four years would have sufficiently answered my views. I would have given liberty to all nations, and directed their views to elevated and noble principles. Honour should have been the basis of all. But fate thwarted my plans; this was the greatest calamity that could have befallen the nations of Europe."

The Empress Josephine, at the time of her divorce, requested permission to proceed to the United States. Napoleon informed her that he could not answer for her safety in crossing the sea. "Then your power finds an obstacle," said she, "would to Heaven there were seas to be crossed for the fulfilment of all your wishes! your glory would then beam for ever!"

END OF MEMOIR AND CONVERSATIONS OF MADAME CAMPAN.

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THE PRIVATE LIFE

OF

MARIE ANTOINETTE

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NOTE.

THE following titles have the signification given below during the period covered by this work :—

MONSEIGNEUR	The Dauphin.
MONSIEUR	The eldest brother of the King, Comte de Provence, afterwards Louis XVIII.
MONSIEUR LE PRINCE	The Prince de Condé, head of the House of Condé.
MONSIEUR LE DUC	The Duc de Bourbon, the eldest son of the Prince de Condé, and the father of the Duc d'Enghien shot by Napoleon.
MONSIEUR LE GRAND	The Grand Equerry under the *ancien régime.*
MONSIEUR LE PREMIER	The First Equerry under the *ancien régime.*
ENFANS DE FRANCE	The royal children.
MADAME / MESDAMES	(Sisters or daughters of the King; or Princesses near the Throne; sometimes used also for the wife of Monsieur, the eldest brother of the King), the Princesses Adelaide, Victoire, Sophie, Louise, daughters of Louis XV., and aunts of Louis XVI.
MADAME ELIZABETH	The Princess Elizabeth, sister of Louis XVI.
MADAME ROYALE	The Princess Marie Thérèse, daughter of Louis XVI., afterwards Duchesse d'Angoulême.
MADEMOISELLE	The daughter of Monsieur, the brother of the King.

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THE PRIVATE LIFE

OF

MARIE ANTOINETTE

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

LOUIS XV. AND HIS QUEEN.

THE first event which made any impression on me in my earliest childhood was the attempt of Damiens to assassinate Louis XV. This occurrence struck me so forcibly that the most minute details relating to the confusion and grief which prevailed at Versailles on that day seem as completely present to my imagination as the most recent events. I had dined with my father and mother, in company with one of their friends. The drawing-room was lighted up with a number of candles, and four card-tables were already occupied, when a friend of the gentleman of the house came in, with a pale and terrified countenance, and said, in a voice scarcely audible, "I bring you terrible news. The King has been assassinated!" Two ladies in company instantly fainted; a brigadier of the Body-guards threw down

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his cards, and cried out, "I do not wonder at it; it is those rascally Jesuits."—"What are you saying, brother?" cried a lady, flying to him; "would you get yourself arrested?"—"Arrested! for what? for unmasking those wretches who want a bigot for a King?" My father came in; he recommended circumspection, saying that the blow was not mortal, and that all meetings ought to be suspended at so critical a moment. He had brought a chaise for my mother, who placed me on her knees. We lived in the Avenue de Paris, and throughout our drive I heard incessant cries and sobs from the foot-paths. At last I saw a man arrested; he was an usher of the King's chamber, who had gone mad, and was crying out, "Yes, I know them; the wretches! the villains!" Our chaise was stopped by this bustle. My mother recognised the unfortunate man who had been seized; she gave his name to the trooper who had stopped him. The poor usher was therefore merely conducted to the *gens d'armes'* guard-room, which was then in the avenue. In times of public calamities, or national events, the slightest acts of imprudence may be fatal. When the people take part in an opinion or occurrence we ought to avoid coming in contact with them, and even alarming them. Informations are then no longer the result of careful investigation, and punishments cease to emanate from impartial justice. At the period of which I am speaking the love of the sovereign was a sort of religion, and this attempt against the life of Louis XV. brought on a multi-

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tude of groundless arrests.[1] M. de la Serre, then Governor of the Invalides, his wife, his daughter, and some of his domestics, were taken up, because Mademoiselle de la Serre, who was that very day

[1] When the news of the attempt made against the King's life became publicly known the populace evinced the greatest rage and despair. They assembled under the windows of Madame (de Pompadour), uttering threatening cries. She began to dread the fate of Madame de Chateauroux. Her friends every moment came in to bring her intelligence. Many only came out of curiosity, to see how she behaved. She did nothing but weep and faint by turns. Dr. Quesnay saw the King five or six times a day. "There is nothing to fear," said he; "if it were any other person he might go to a ball." I told Madame that the Keeper of the Seals had had an interview with the King, from which he had returned to his own residence, followed by a crowd of people. "*And that is a friend!*" said she, bursting into tears. The Abbé Bernis said this was not a time to form a precipitate judgment of him. Half an hour afterwards I returned into the drawing-room. The Keeper of the Seals came in. "*How is Madame de Pompadour?*" said he, with a cold and severe air. "*As you may easily imagine,*" I replied; and he entered her apartment, where he remained half an hour alone with her. At length she rang; I went in, followed by the Abbé Bernis. "I must go, my dear Abbé," said she. She gave orders for all her domestics to be ready to set out. To several ladies, who came to condole with her, she compared the conduct of M. de Machault, the Keeper of the Seals, with that of the Duc de Richelieu at Metz. "He believes, or pretends to believe," said she, "that the priests will require me to be sent away with disgrace; but Quesnay and all the physicians say there is not the slightest danger."

Madame de Mirepoix came in, crying out, "What are all these trunks for, Madame? Your servants say you are leaving us."—"Alas! my dear friend, such is the will of the master; at least so says M. de Machault."—"And what is his advice?" "To set out immediately."—"He wishes to be master himself," said Madame de Mirepoix, "and he is betraying you. Whoever leaves the game, loses it."

M. de Maurigy afterwards told me that an appearance of an intended departure would be kept up to avoid irritating the enemies of Madame; that the little Maréchale (Madame de Mirepoix) had decided the matter; and that the Keeper of the

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come from her convent to pass the holiday of the King's birthday with her family, said, in her father's drawing-room, on hearing this news from Versailles, "That is not to be wondered at; I have often heard Mother N—— say that it would certainly happen, because the King is not sufficiently attached to religion." Mother N——, the director, and several of the nuns of this convent, were interrogated by the lieutenant of police. The public animosity against the Jesuits, kept up by the partisans of Port Royal and the adepts in the new philosophy, did not conceal the suspicions which they directed against the Jesuits; and although there was not the slightest proof against that Order, the attempt to assassinate the King was certainly made use of against it, a few years afterwards, by the party which effected the destruction of the

Seals would be the sufferer. Quesnay came in, and, with his usual grimaces, related a fable of a fox, who, being at dinner with other animals, persuaded one of them that his enemies were seeking him, and having induced him to withdraw, devoured his share in his absence. I did not see Madame until much later, when she was going to bed. She was more calm; affairs were improving. Machault, that faithless friend, was dismissed. The King came as usual to Madame. A few days afterwards Madame paid a visit to M. d'Argenson. She returned much out of temper, and the King shortly afterwards arrived. I heard Madame sobbing. The Abbé Bernis came to me, and desired me to carry her some Hoffman's drops. The King himself prepared the potion with some sugar, and presented it to her with the most gracious air. She smiled and kissed his hands. I withdrew, and the next day heard of the exile of M. d'Argenson. He was much to blame, and this was the greatest stretch of Madame's influence. The King was very much attached to M. d'Argenson, and the war by sea and land rendered it very impolitic to discard these two ministers.—*Journal of Madame de Hausset.*

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Company of Jesus. The wretch Damiens avenged himself on various persons whom he had served in several provinces, by getting them arrested; and when they were confronted with him, he said to some of them, "It was out of revenge for your ill-treatment of me that I put you into this fright." To some women he said, "That he had amused himself in his prison with the thoughts of the terror they would feel." This monster confessed that he had murdered the virtuous La Bourdonnaye, by giving him a *lavement* of aquafortis. He had also committed several other crimes. People are too careless about those whom they take into their service; such examples prove that too many precautions cannot be used in ascertaining the character of strangers before we admit them into our houses.

I have often heard M. de Landsmath, equerry and master of the hounds, who used to come frequently to my father's, say, that on the news of the attempt on the King's life he instantly repaired to his Majesty. I cannot repeat the coarse expressions he made use of to encourage his Majesty; but his account of the affair, long afterwards, amused the parties in which he was prevailed on to relate it, when all apprehensions respecting the consequences of the event had subsided. This M. de Landsmath was an old soldier, who had given proofs of extraordinary valour; nothing had been able to soften his manners or subdue his excessive bluntness to the respectful customs of the Court. The King was very fond of him. He possessed prodigious

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strength, and had often contended with Marshal Saxe, renowned for his great bodily power, in trying the strength of their respective wrists.[1] M. de Landsmath had a thundering voice. When he came into the King's apartment he found the Dauphin and Mesdames, his Majesty's daughters, there; the princesses, in tears, surrounded the King's bed. "Send out all these weeping ladies, Sire," said the old equerry; "I want to speak to you alone." The King made a sign to the princesses to withdraw. "Come," said Landsmath, "your wound is nothing; you had plenty of waistcoats and flannels on." Then uncovering his breast, "Look here," said he, showing four or five great scars, "these are something like wounds; I received them thirty years ago; now cough as loud as you can." The King did so. "'Tis nothing at all," said Landsmath; "you must laugh at it; we shall hunt a stag together in four days." "But suppose the blade was poisoned," said the King. "Old grandams' tales," replied Landsmath; "if it had been so, the waistcoats and flannels would have rubbed the poison off." The King was pacified, and passed a very good night.

This same M. de Landsmath, who by his peremp-

[1] One day when the King was hunting in the forest of St. Germain, Landsmath, riding before him, wanted a cart, filled with the slime of a pond, that had just been cleansed, to draw up out of the way. The carter resisted, and even answered with impertinence. Landsmath, without dismounting, seized him by the breast of his coat, lifted him up, and threw him into his cart.—*Madame Campan.*

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tory and familiar language thus calmed the fears of Louis XV. on the day of Damiens' horrible crime, was one of those people who, in the most haughty courts, often tell the truth bluntly. It is remarkable that there is a person of this description to be found in almost every court, who seems to supply the place of the ancient king's jester, and to claim the right of saying whatever he pleases.

His Majesty one day asked M. de Landsmath how old he was? He was aged, and by no means fond of thinking of his age; he evaded the question. A fortnight after Louis XV. took a paper out of his pocket and read aloud: "On such a day in the month of —— one thousand six hundred and eighty ——, was baptized by me, Rector of ——, the son of the high and mighty lord," etc. "What's that?" said Landsmath angrily; "has your Majesty been procuring the certificate of my baptism?" "There it is, you see, Landsmath," said the King. "Well, Sire, hide it as fast as you can; a prince entrusted with the happiness of twenty-five millions of people ought not wilfully to hurt the feelings of a single individual."

The King learned that Landsmath had lost his confessor, a missionary priest of the parish of Notre Dame. It was the custom of the Lazarists to expose their dead with the face uncovered. Louis XV. wished to try his equerry's firmness. "You have lost your confessor, I hear," said the King.—"Yes, Sire."—"He will be exposed with his face bare?"—"Such is the custom."—"I command you to go and

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see him."—"Sire, my confessor was my friend; it would be very painful to me."—"No matter; I command you."—"Are you really in earnest, Sire?"—"Quite so."—"It would be the first time in my life that I had disobeyed my sovereign's order. I will go." The next day the King at his levee, as soon as he perceived Landsmath, said, "Have you done as I desired you, Landsmath?"—"Undoubtedly, Sire."—"Well, what did you see?"—"Faith, I saw that your Majesty and I are no great shakes!"[1]

At the death of Queen Maria Leczinska, M. Campan, who was afterwards secretary of the closet to Marie Antoinette, and at that time an officer of the chamber, having performed several confidential duties at the time of that Queen's decease, the King asked Madame Adelaide how he should reward him. She requested him to create an office in his household of master of the wardrobe, with a salary of a thousand crowns for M. Campan. "I

[1] "The King often talked about death, burials, and cemeteries," says Madame de Hausset: "nobody could be more melancholy by nature. Madame de Pompadour has often told me that he felt a painful sensation whenever he was forced to laugh, and that he often requested her to put an end to a diverting story. He smiled, and that was all. He had, in general, the most gloomy ideas on all events. When a new minister came into office, the King would say, 'He spread out his goods, like the rest, and promised the finest things in the world, none of which will ever happen. He does not know how the land lies: he will see.' When schemes for increasing the naval force were proposed to him, he used to say, 'I have heard it talked of continually for the last twenty years; France will never have a navy, I believe.' I had this from M. de Maurigy."

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will do so," said the King; "it will be an honourable title; but tell Campan not to add a single crown to his expenses, for you will see they will never pay him."

The manner in which Mademoiselle de Romans, mistress to Louis XV. and mother of the Abbé de Bourbon, was presented to him, deserves, I think, to be related. The King had gone, with a grand cavalcade, to Paris to hold a bed of justice. As he passed the terrace of the Tuileries he observed a chevalier de St. Louis, dressed in a faded lutestring coat, and a woman of a pretty good figure, holding on the parapet of the terrace a young girl strikingly beautiful, much adorned, and dressed in a rose-coloured taffety frock.

The King's notice was involuntarily attracted by the marked manner in which he was pointed out to the girl. On returning to Versailles, he called Le Bel, the minister and confidant of his secret pleasures, and ordered him to seek in Paris a young female about twelve or thirteen years of age, describing her as I have just mentioned. Le Bel assured him he saw no probability of the success of such a commission. "Pardon me," said Louis XV., "this family must live in the neighbourhood of the Tuileries, on the side of the Faubourg St. Honoré, or at the entrance of the Faubourg St. Germain. These people certainly go on foot; they would not make the girl, of whom they seem so fond, cross all Paris. They are poor; the clothes of the child were so new that I

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have no doubt they were made for the very day I was to enter Paris. She will wear that dress all the summer; they will walk in the Tuileries on Sundays and holidays. Apply to the man who sells lemonade at the terrace of the Feuillans—children take refreshment there; you will discover her by these means."

Le Bel fulfilled his master's orders; and within a month discovered the dwelling of the girl; he found that Louis XV. was not in the least mistaken with respect to the intentions which he supposed to exist. All conditions were easily agreed on; the King contributed, by considerable presents, to the education of Mademoiselle de Romans for the space of two years. She was kept totally ignorant of her future destiny; and when she had completed her fifteenth year she was taken to Versailles, on pretence of going to see the palace. Between four and five in the afternoon she was conducted into the mirror gallery. All the grand apartments were usually very solitary at that hour. Le Bel, who waited for them, opened the glass door which led from the gallery into the King's closet, and invited Mademoiselle de Romans to go in and examine its beauties. Encouraged by the sight of a man whom she knew, and excited by the curiosity so excusable at her age, she eagerly accepted the offer, but insisted on Le Bel's procuring the same pleasure for her parents. He assured her that it was impossible; that they were going to sit down in one of the windows of the gallery and wait for her, and

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that, when she had seen the inner apartments, he would bring her back to them. She consented; the glass door closed on her. Le Bel showed her the chamber, the council room, and talked with enthusiasm of the monarch who possessed the splendour with which she was surrounded; and at length conducted her to the private apartments, where Mademoiselle de Romans found the King himself, awaiting her arrival with all the impatience and all the desires of a prince who had been two years engaged in bringing about the moment of this interview.[1]

What painful reflections are excited by all this

[1] Among the young ladies of very tender age with whom the King amused himself during the influence of Madame de Pompadour, or afterwards, there was also a Mademoiselle de Tiercelin, whom his Majesty ordered to take the name of Bonneval the very day she was presented to him. The King was the first who perceived this child, when not above nine years old, in the care of a nurse, in the garden of the Tuileries, one day when he went in state to his "good city of Paris;" and having, in the evening, spoken of her beauty to Le Bel, the servant applied to M. de Sartine, who traced her out, and bought her of the nurse for a few louis. She was daughter of M. de Tiercelin, a man of quality, who could not patiently endure an affront of this nature. He was, however, compelled to be silent; he was told his child was lost; and that it would be best for him to submit to the sacrifice, unless he wished to lose his liberty also.

Mademoiselle de Tiercelin, now become Madame de Bonneval, was introduced under that name into the private apartments at Versailles, by the King's desire. She was naturally very wild, and did not like his Majesty. "You are an ugly man," said she, throwing the jewels and diamonds which the King had given her out of the window. The Duc de Choiseul had the weakness to be jealous of this child and her father, who were equally harmless. He was told that the King of Prussia, being tired of Madame de Pompadour, was secretly labouring to get Mademoiselle de Tiercelin declared the King's mistress; the

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immorality! The art with which this intrigue had been carried on, and the genuine innocence of the youthful de Romans, were doubtless the motives of the King's particular áttachment to this mistress. She was the only one who prevailed on him to allow her son to bear the name of Bourbon. At the moment of his birth she received a note in the King's handwriting, containing the following words: "The Rector of Chaillot, when he baptizes the child of Mademoiselle de Romans, will give him the following names: Louis N. de Bourbon." A few years afterwards the King, being dissatisfied at the consequence which Mademoiselle de Romans assumed on account of her good fortune in having given birth to an acknowledged son, and seeing, by the splendid way in which she was bringing him up, that she entertained the idea of causing him to be legitimatised, had him taken out of his mother's hands. This commission was executed with great severity. Louis XV. had vowed never to legitimatise a natural child; the great number of princes of this description which Louis XIV. had left was burdensome to the State, and made this determination of Louis XV. truly laudable. The Abbé de Bourbon was very handsome, and exactly resembled his father; he was much beloved by the princesses, the King's daughters; and his ecclesiastical pros-

King certainly doated on her. The minister was assured that M. de Tiercelin was engaged in most extensive operations for effecting the object of this foreign intrigue. The father and daughter were in consequence separately confined in the Bastile. —*Anecdotes of the Reign of Louis XV.*, by Soulavie.

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pects would have been advanced by Louis XV. to the highest degree. A cardinal's hat was intended for him, as well as the abbey of St. Germain des Prés, and the Bishopric of Bayeux. Without being considered one of the princes of the blood, he would have enjoyed a most happy lot. He died at Rome, of confluent smallpox, generally regretted; but the misfortunes with which his family have since been afflicted make us regard his death as a merciful dispensation of Providence. Mademoiselle de Romans married a gentleman named Cavanac; the King was displeased at it, and she was universally blamed for having in some degree abandoned by this alliance the plain title of mother of the Abbé de Bourbon.[1]

[1] The following, written with extraordinary impartiality by M. de Lacretelle, leaves no possible doubt as to the origin and extent of these scandalous practices:—

"Louis, satiated with the conquests which the Court offered him, was led by a depraved imagination to form an establishment for his pleasures, of such an infamous description that, after having depicted the debaucheries of the regency, it is difficult to find terms appropriate to an excess of this kind. Several elegant houses, built in an enclosure called the *Parc-aux-cerfs*, were used for the reception of women, who there awaited the pleasure of their master. Hither were brought young girls, sold by their parents, and sometimes forced from them. They left this place loaded with gifts, but almost certain of never more beholding the King who had dishonoured them, even when they bore with them a pledge of his base passion. Hence corruption found its way into the most peaceful and obscure habitations. It was skilfully and patiently fostered by those who ministered to the debaucheries of Louis. Whole years were occupied in the seduction of girls not yet of marriageable age, and in undermining the principles of modesty and fidelity in young women. Some of these victims were so unhappy as to feel a true affection and sincere attachment to the King. For a few minutes he would

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The monotonous habits of royal greatness too frequently inspire princes with the desire of procuring for themselves the enjoyments of private individuals; and then they vainly flatter themselves with the hope of remaining concealed in mysterious obscurity. They ought to be warned of these errors, and accustomed to support the tediousness of greatness, as well as to enjoy its extensive advantages, which they well know how to do. Louis XV., by his noble carriage, and the mild yet majestic expression of his features, was perfectly worthy to succeed to Louis the Great. But he too frequently indulged in secret pleasures, which at last were sure to become known. During several winters, he was passionately fond of *candles' end balls*, as he called those parties amongst the very lowest classes of society. He got intelligence of the *picnics* given by the tradesmen, milliners, and seamstresses of Versailles, whither he repaired in a black domino, and masked, accompanied by

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seem moved by their fidelity; but he quickly repressed such feelings, and persuaded himself that it was all artifice, intended to govern him; and he himself became the informer against them to the Marchioness, who soon forced her rivals back into their original obscurity. Mademoiselle de Romans was the only one who procured her son to be acknowledged as the King's child. Madame de Pompadour succeeded in removing a rival who seemed to have made so profound an impression on the King's heart. Mademoiselle de Romans had her son taken from her; he was brought up by a peasant, and his mother durst not protest against this outrage, until after the King's death. Louis XVI. restored her her son, and took him under his protection; he was afterwards known under the name of the Abbé de Bourbon."—*History of France*, by Lacretelle, vol. iii.

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the Captain of his Guards, masked like himself. His great delight was to go *en brouette*.[1] Care was always taken to give notice to five or six officers of the King's or Queen's chamber to be there, in order that his Majesty might be surrounded by safe people, without perceiving it or finding it troublesome. Probably the Captain of the Guards also took other precautions of this description on his part. My father-in-law, when the King and he were both young, has often made one amongst the servants desired to attend masked at these parties, assembled in some garret, or parlour of a public-house. In those times, during the carnival, masked companies had a right to join the citizens' balls; it was sufficient that one of the party should unmask and name himself.

These secret excursions and his too habitual intercourse with ladies more distinguished for their personal charms than for the advantages of education, were no doubt the means by which the King acquired many vulgar expressions which otherwise would never have reached his ears.

Yet amidst the most shameful excesses the King sometimes resumed suddenly the dignity of his rank in a very noble manner. The familiar courtiers of Louis XV. had one day abandoned themselves to the unrestrained gaiety of a supper, after returning from the chase. Each boasted of and described the beauty of his mistress. Some of

[1] In a kind of sedan chair, running on two wheels, and drawn by a chairman.

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them amused themselves with giving a particular account of their wives' personal defects. An imprudent word, addressed to Louis XV., and applicable only to the Queen, instantly dispelled all the mirth of the entertainment. The King assumed his regal air, and knocking with his knife on the table twice or thrice: "Gentlemen," said he, "here is the King!"

Three young men of the college of St. Germain, who had just completed their course of studies, knowing no person about the Court, and having heard that strangers were always well treated there, resolved to dress themselves completely in the Armenian costume, and, thus clad, to present themselves to see the grand ceremony of the reception of several knights of the Order of the Holy Ghost. Their stratagem met with all the success with which they had flattered themselves. While the procession was passing through the long mirror gallery, the Swiss of the apartments placed them in the first row of spectators, recommending every one to pay all possible attention to the strangers. The latter, however, were imprudent enough to enter the Œil-de-Bœuf Chamber, where were Messieurs Cardonne and Ruffin, interpreters of Oriental languages, and the first clerk of the consuls' department, whose business it was to attend to everything which related to the natives of the East who were in France. The three scholars were immediately surrounded and questioned by these gentlemen, at first in modern Greek. Without being disconcerted, they

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made signs that they did not understand it. They were then addressed in Turkish and Arabic; at length one of the interpreters, losing all patience, exclaimed, "Gentlemen, you certainly must understand some of the languages in which you have been addressed. What country can you possibly come from then?" "From St. Germain-en-Laye, sir," replied the boldest among them; "this is the first time you have put the question to us in French." They then confessed the motive of their disguise; the eldest of them was not more than eighteen years of age. Louis XV. was informed of the affair. He laughed heartily, ordered them a few hours' confinement and a good admonition, after which they were to be set at liberty.

Louis XV. liked to talk about death, though he was extremely apprehensive of it; but his excellent health and his royal dignity probably made him imagine himself invulnerable. He often said to people who had very bad colds, "You've a churchyard cough there." Hunting one day in the forest of Senard, in a year in which bread was extremely dear, he met a man on horseback carrying a coffin. "Whither are you carrying that coffin?" "To the village of ——," answered the peasant. "Is it for a man or a woman?"—"For a man."—"What did he die of?"—"Of hunger," bluntly replied the villager. The King spurred on his horse, and asked no more questions.

When I was young I often met with Madame de Marchais, the wife of the King's first valet de

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chambre, in company. She was a very well-informed woman, and had enjoyed the favour of Louis XV., being a relation of Madame de Pompadour. M. de Marchais was rich and much respected; he had served in the army, was a chevalier de St. Louis, and, besides being principal valet de chambre, was Governor of the Louvre. Madame de Marchais was visited by the whole Court; the captains of the guards came there constantly, and many officers of the Body-guard. Eminent officers of every kind used to get introduced to her, as to Madame Geoffrin; she possessed some influence, particularly in soliciting votes for candidates for the academicians' chairs. I have seen all the celebrated men of the age at her house: La Harpe, Diderot, d'Alembert, Duclos, Thomas, etc. She was as remarkable for her wit and studious display as her husband for his good-nature and simplicity; he was fond of spoiling her most innocent schemes for obtaining admiration. No one could describe an academical speech, a sermon, or the subject of a new piece with so much precision and grace as Madame de Marchais. She had also the art of turning the conversation at pleasure upon any ancient or modern work; and her husband often delighted in saying to those who sat near him, "My wife read that this morning." Count Angiviller, charmed with the graces of her mind, paid assiduous court to her, and when she became the widow of M. de Marchais, married her. She was still living at Versailles in the early part of the reign of Napoleon, but never

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left her bed. She had retained her fondness for dress, and although unable to rise, always had her hair dressed as people used to wear it twenty years before that period. She disguised the ravages of time under a prodigious quantity of white and red paint, and seemed, by the feeble light which penetrated through her closed blinds and drawn curtains, nothing but a kind of doll, but a doll which spoke in a charming and most spirited manner. She had retained a very beautiful head of hair to an advanced age; it was said that the celebrated Count St. Germain, who had appeared at the Court of Louis XV. as one of the most famous alchemists of the day, had given her a liquor which preserved the hair, and prevented it from turning white through age.

Louis XV. had, as is well known, adopted the whimsical system of separating Louis de Bourbon from the King of France. As a private individual he had his personal fortune, his own distinct financial interests. He used to deal as an individual in all the contracts and bargains he engaged in. He had bought a tolerably handsome house at the *Parc-aux-cerfs* at Versailles, where he used to keep one of those obscure mistresses whom the indulgence or the policy of Madame de Pompadour tolerated, so long as she herself retained the title of his declared mistress.[1] After the King had relinquished this custom, he wished to sell the house. Sevin, first clerk of the War Office, offered

[1] Madame one day called me into her cabinet, where the King was walking up and down with a very serious air. "You

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to purchase it; the notary instructed to effect the sale informed the King of his proposals. The contract for the sale was made out between Louis de

must," said she, "go and pass a few days in the Avenue of St. Cloud, at a house which will be pointed out to you, where you will find a young lady ready to lie in. Like one of the goddesses of the poets, you will preside at the birth. The object of your mission is that everything may take place according to the King's wishes, and secretly. You will be present at the christening, and give the names of the father and mother." The King began to laugh, and said, "*The father is a very worthy man.*" Madame added, "*Beloved by all the world, and adored by all who are acquainted with him.*" Madame went to a drawer, and took out a little casket, which she opened, and produced a diamond aigrette, saying to the King, "I had reasons for not getting a finer one." "It is too handsome as it is," said the King, embracing Madame; "how kind you are!" She shed tears of emotion, and placing her hand on the King's heart, said, "It is there that my wishes are centred." Tears now came into the King's eyes also, nor could I refrain from crying, though I scarcely knew why. The King then said to me: "Guimard will see you every day to advise and assist you, and at the critical moment you will send for him. But we have said nothing about the godfather and godmother. You are to announce them, as if they were coming, and an instant afterwards you will pretend to receive a letter informing you that they cannot come. You will then pretend not to know what to do, and Guimard will say, 'The best way is to have anybody you can get.' You will then take the servant of the house, and some pauper or chairman, and give them only twelve francs to avoid attracting notice." "A louis," interrupted Madame, "that you may not make mischief in another way."

When the King was gone Madame said to me, "Well, what do you think of my part in this affair?" "It is that of a superior woman and an excellent friend," said I. "It is his heart that I wish to possess," answered she; "and none of these little uneducated girls will deprive me of that. I should not be so tranquil if some beautiful woman of the Court were to attempt the conquest." I asked Madame whether the young lady knew that the father of the child was the King. "I do not think so," said she; "but as he seemed to love this one it is thought that there has been too much readiness to let her know it. Were it not for that it was to have been insinuated to the world

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Bourbon and Pierre Sevin; and the King sent word to the purchaser to bring him the money himself in gold. The first clerk collected 40,000 francs

that the father was a Polish nobleman related to the Queen, and that he had apartments in the chateau."

After receiving some additional instructions I went to the Avenue of St. Cloud, where I found the abbess and Guimard, a servant belonging to the chateau, with a nurse and assistant, two old domestics, and a girl, half housemaid, half femme de chambre. The young lady was extremely pretty and elegantly dressed, but had nothing very striking in her appearance. I supped with her and the gouvernante, called Madame Bertrand. I gave the lady the aigrette, which delighted her wonderfully. The next day I had a private conversation with her, when she asked me, "How is the Count [meaning the King]? He will be very sorry that he cannot be with me; but he has been obliged to take a long journey." I assented. "He is a very handsome man," continued she, "and loves me with all his heart; he has promised me an annuity, but I love him disinterestedly, and if he would take me I would go to Poland with him." She afterwards talked of her parents. "My mother," said she, "kept a great druggist's shop, and my father belonged to the six companies, and everyone knows there is nothing better than that; he was twice very near being sheriff."

Six days afterwards she was delivered of a boy, but was told, according to my instructions, that it was a girl; and soon afterwards that it was dead, in order that no trace of its existence might remain for a certain period, after which it was to be restored to its mother. The King gave ten or twelve thousand francs a year to each of his natural children, and they inherited from one another. Seven or eight had already died. When I returned Madame asked me many questions. "The King," said she, "is disgusted with his princess, and I fancy he will set out for Poland in two days." "And what will become of the young lady?" said I. "She will be married to some country gentleman," said she, "and she will have a fortune of forty thousand crowns or so and a few diamonds." This little adventure, which thus placed me in the King's confidence, far from procuring me marks of his kindness, seemed to make him behave more coolly towards me, for he was ashamed that I should be acquainted with his low amours. He was also embarrassed about the services which Madame rendered him.—*Journal of Madame de Hausset.*

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in louis d'or, and being introduced by the notary of the King's private cabinet, delivered the purchase money of the house into his Majesty's own hands.[1]

Out of his private funds the King paid the household expenses of his mistresses, those of the education of his illegitimate daughters, who were brought up in convents at Paris, and their dowries when they married.

Those men who are most completely abandoned to dissolute manners are not, on that account, insensible to virtue in women. The Comtesse de Perigord was as beautiful as virtuous. During some excursions she made to Choisy, whither she had been invited, she perceived that the King took great notice of her. Her demeanour of chilling respect, her cautious perseverance in shunning all serious conversation with the monarch, were insufficient to extinguish this rising flame, and he at length addressed a letter to her, worded in the most passionate terms. This excellent woman instantly formed her resolution: honour forbade her returning the King's passion, whilst her profound respect for the sovereign made her unwilling to disturb his tranquillity. She therefore voluntarily banished herself to an estate she possessed, called Chalais, near Barbezieux, the mansion of which had been uninhabited nearly a century: the porter's lodge was the only place in a condition to receive her. From this seat she wrote to his Majesty, explaining

[1] A different account of this transaction will, however, be found in a footnote a few pages further on.

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her motives for leaving Court; and she remained there several years without visiting Paris. Louis XV. was speedily attracted by other objects, and regained the composure to which Madame de Perigord had thought it her duty to sacrifice so much. Some years after, Mesdames' lady of honour died. Many great families solicited the place. The King, without answering any of their applications, wrote to the Comtesse de Perigord: "My daughters have just lost their lady of honour; this place, Madame, is your due, no less on account of your personal qualities, than of the illustrious name of your family."

Comte d'Halville, sprung from a very ancient Swiss house, commenced his career at Versailles in the humble rank of ensign in the regiment of Swiss guards. His name and distinguished ability gained him the patronage of some powerful friends, who, in order to support the honour of the ancient name he bore, by a handsome fortune, obtained for him in marriage the daughter of a very rich financier, named M. de la Garde. The offspring of this union was an only daughter, who married Count Esterhazy. Amongst the estates which belonged to Mademoiselle de la Garde was the Château des Trous, situate four leagues from Versailles, where the Count was visited by many people attached to the Court. A young ensign of the Body-guards, who had obtained that rank on account of his name, and of the favour which his family enjoyed, and possessed all the confidence which usually accom-

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panies unmerited success, but of which the progress of time fortunately relieves young people, was one day taking upon him to give his opinion of the Swiss nobility, although he knew nothing of the great families of Switzerland. Without the least delicacy or consideration for the Count, his host, he asserted boldly that there were no ancient families in Switzerland. "Excuse me," said the Count very coolly, "there are several of great antiquity." "Can you name them, sir?" answered the youth. "Yes," said M. de Halville; "for instance, there is my house, and that of Hapsburg, which now reigns in Germany." "Of course you have your reasons for naming your own family first?" replied the impudent ensign. "Yes, sir," said M. de Halville sternly; "because the house of Hapsburg dates from the period when its founder was page to my ancestors. Read history, study the antiquities of nations and families; and in future be more circumspect in your assertions."

Weak as Louis XV. was, the parliaments would never have obtained his consent to the convocation of the States-General. I heard an anecdote on this subject from two officers attached to that prince's household. It was at the period when the remonstrances of the parliaments, and the refusals to register the decrees for levying taxes, produced alarm with respect to the state of the finances. This became the subject of conversation one evening at the coucher of Louis XV. "You will see, Sire," said a courtier, whose office placed him in

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close communication with the King, "that all this will make it absolutely necessary to assemble the States-General." The King, roused by this speech from the habitual apathy of his character, seized the courtier by the arm, and said to him, in a passion, "Never repeat these words. I am not sanguinary; but had I a brother, and he were to dare to give me such advice, I would sacrifice him, within twenty-four hours, to the duration of the monarchy, and the tranquillity of the kingdom."

Several years prior to his death, the Dauphin, the father of Louis XVI., had confluent smallpox, which endangered his life; and after his convalescence, he was long troubled with a malignant ulcer under the nose. He was injudiciously advised to get rid of it by the use of extract of lead, which proved effectual; but from that time the Dauphin, who was corpulent, insensibly grew thin; and a short dry cough evinced that the humour, driven in, had fallen on the lungs. Some persons also suspected him of having taken acids in too great a quantity for the purpose of reducing his bulk. The state of his health was not, however, such as to excite alarm. At the camp at Compiegne, in July 1764, the Dauphin reviewed the troops, and evinced much activity in the performance of his duties; it was even observed that he was seeking to gain the attachment of the army. He presented the Dauphiness to the soldiers, saying, with a simplicity which at that time made a great sensation, "Mes enfans, here is my wife." Returning late on horse-

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back to Compiegne, he found he had taken a chill; the heat of the day had been excessive; the prince's clothes had been wet with perspiration. An illness followed, in which the prince began to spit blood. His principal physician wished to have him bled; the consulting physicians insisted on purgation, and their advice was followed. The pleurisy being ill cured, assumed and retained all the symptoms of consumption; the Dauphin languished from that period until December 1765, and died at Fontainebleau, where the Court, on account of his condition, had prolonged its stay, which usually ended on the 2d of November.

The Dauphiness, his widow, was excessively afflicted; but the immoderate despair which characterised her grief induced many to suspect that the loss of the crown was an important part of the calamity she lamented. She long refused to eat enough to support life; she encouraged her tears to flow by placing portraits of the Dauphin in every retired part of her apartments. She had him represented pale, and ready to expire, in a picture placed at the foot of her bed, under draperies of gray cloth, with which the chambers of the princesses were always hung in court mournings. Their grand cabinet was hung with black cloth, with an alcove, a canopy, and a throne, on which they received compliments of condolence after the first period of the deep mourning. The Dauphiness, some months before the end of her career, regretted her conduct in abridging it; but it was too late; the

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fatal blow had been struck. It may also be presumed that living with a consumptive man had contributed to her complaint. This princess had no opportunity of displaying her qualities; living in a court, in which she was eclipsed by the King and Queen, the only characteristics that could be remarked in her were her extreme attachment to her husband, and her great piety.

The Dauphin was little known, and his character has been much mistaken. He himself, as he confessed to his intimate friends, sought to disguise it. He one day asked one of his most familiar servants, "What do they say in Paris of that great fool of a Dauphin?" The person interrogated seeming confused, the Dauphin urged him to express himself sincerely, saying, "Speak freely; that is positively the idea which I wish people to form of me."

As he died of a disease which allows the last moment to be anticipated long beforehand, he wrote much, and transmitted his affections and his prejudices to his son by secret notes.[1] This was

[1] The Dauphin had for several years superintended the education of his three children, the Duc de Berri, afterwards Louis XVI., the Comte de Provence, and the Comte d'Artois.

The deportment of the Duc de Berri was austere, serious, reserved, and often rough; he had no taste for play, exhibitions, or amusements; he was a youth of inviolable veracity, constantly employing himself in copying, and afterwards composing geographical maps, and in filing iron. His father had shown a predilection for him, which excited the jealousy of his brothers. Madame Adelaide, who tenderly loved him, used to say, in order to encourage him and overcome his timidity, "*Speak out freely, Berri; shout, scold, make an uproar, like your brother d'Artois; knock down my china and break it; make some noise in the*

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really what prevented the Queen from recalling M. de Choiseul at the death of Louis XV., and what promoted M. de Muy, the intimate friend of the Dauphin, to the place of minister of war. The destruction of the Jesuits, effected by M. de Choiseul, had given the Dauphin's hatred of him that character of party spirit which induced him to transmit it to his son. Had he ascended the throne, he would have supported the Jesuits and priests in general, and kept down the philosophers. Maria Leczinska, the wife of Louis XV., placed her highest merit in abstaining from public affairs, and in the strict observance of her religious duties; never asking anything for herself, and sending all she possessed to the poor. Such a life ought to secure a person against future detraction, but has not preserved the memory of this princess from that venom which Soulavie makes the Duc de Choiseul deal around him indiscriminately.

Queen Maria Leczinska,[1] the wife of Louis XV., often spoke of the humble position in which she stood at the time when the policy of the Court of Versailles caused the marriage of the King with the young Infanta to be broken off, and raised a Polish

world." The young Duc de Berri only became the more silent, and could not lay aside his natural character.—*Historical and Political Memoirs of the Reign of Louis XVI.*, by Soulavie, vol. ii.

[1] In some Memoirs of the Reign of Maria Leczinska, it is said that she was to have been married to the Duc de Bourbon. I know not whether this be certain, but I can affirm that she has often conversed with Madame Campan, my mother-in-law, on the project of her marriage with the Duc d'Estrées.—*Madame Campan.*

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princess, daughter of a dethroned monarch, to the rank of Queen of France. Before this unhoped-for event changed the destiny of this virtuous princess, there had been some idea of marrying her to the Duc d'Estrées; and, when the Duchess of that name came to pay her court to her at Versailles, she said to those who surrounded her, "I might have been in that lady's place myself, and curtseying to the Queen of France." She used to relate that the King, her father, informed her of her elevation in a manner which might have made too strong an impression on her mind; that he had taken care to avoid disturbing her tranquillity, to leave her in total ignorance of the first negotiations set on foot relative to her marriage; and that when all was definitively arranged, and the ambassador arrived, her father went to her apartment, placed an arm-chair for her, had her set in it, and addressed her thus: "Allow me, Madame, to enjoy a happiness which far outweighs all the misfortunes that I have suffered; I wish to be the first to pay my respects to the Queen of France."

Maria Leczinska was not handsome; but she possessed much intelligence, an expressive countenance, and a simplicity of manners, set off by the gracefulness of the Polish lady. She loved the King, and found his early infidelities very grievous to endure. Nevertheless, the death of Madame de Chateauroux, whom she had known very young, and who had even been honoured by her kindness, made a painful impression on her. This good

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Queen continued to suffer from the bad effects of an early superstitious education. She was fearful of ghosts. The first night after she heard of this almost sudden death she could not sleep, and made one of her women sit up, who endeavoured to calm her restlessness by telling her stories, which she would in such cases call for, as children do with their nurses. On this night nothing could overcome her wakefulness; her lady-in-waiting, thinking that she was asleep, was leaving her bedside on tiptoe; the slightest noise on the floor roused the Queen, who cried, "Whither are you going? Stay; go on with your story." As it was past two in the morning, this woman, whose name was Boirot, and who was somewhat unceremonious, said, "What can be the matter with your Majesty to-night? Are you feverish? Shall I call up the physician?" "Oh no, no, my good Boirot, I am not ill; but that poor Madame de Chateauroux,—if she were to come again!" "Jesus, Madame," cried the woman, who had lost all patience, "if Madame de Chateauroux should come again, it certainly will not be your Majesty that she will look for." The Queen burst into a fit of laughter at this observation; her agitation subsided, and she soon fell asleep.

The nomination of Madame le Normand d'Etioles, Marquise de Pompadour, to the place of lady of the bed-chamber to the Queen, offended the dignity, as well as the sensibility, of this princess. Nevertheless, the respectful homage paid by the Marchioness, the interest which certain great

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personages, who were candidates for her favour, had in procuring her an indulgent reception from her Majesty, the respect of Maria Leczinska for the King's wishes, all conspired to secure her the Queen's favourable notice. Madame de Pompadour's brother received Letters of Nobility from his Majesty, and was appointed superintendent of the buildings and gardens. He often presented to her Majesty, through the medium of his sister, the rarest flowers, pine-apples, and early vegetables from the gardens of Trianon and Choisy. One day, when the Marchioness came into the Queen's apartments, carrying a large basket of flowers, which she held in her two beautiful arms, without gloves, as a mark of respect, the Queen loudly declared her admiration of her beauty; and seemed as if she wished to defend the King's choice, by praising her various charms in detail, in a manner that would have been as suitable to a production of the fine arts as to a living being. After applauding the complexion, eyes, and fine arms of the favourite, with that haughty condescension which renders approbation more offensive than flattering, the Queen at length requested her to sing, in the attitude in which she stood, being desirous of hearing the voice and musical talent by which the King's Court had been charmed in the performances of the private apartments, and thus combining the gratification of the ears with that of the eyes. The Marchioness, who still held her enormous basket, was perfectly sensible of something offensive in

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this request, and tried to excuse herself from singing. The Queen at last commanded her; she then exerted her fine voice in the solo of Armida—"At length he is in my power." The change in her Majesty's countenance was so obvious that the ladies present at this scene had the greatest difficulty to keep theirs.

The Queen received visitors with much grace and dignity; but it is very common with the great to reiterate the same questions; a sterility of ideas is very excusable on public occasions, when there is so little to say. The lady of an ambassador, however, made her Majesty feel that she did not choose to give way to her forgetfulness in matters concerning herself. This lady was *enceinte*, but nevertheless constantly appeared at the Queen's drawing-rooms, who never failed to ask her whether she was in the state alluded to, and, on receiving an answer in the affirmative, always inquired how many months of her time had elapsed. At length the lady, weary of the eternal repetition of the same question, and of the total forgetfulness which betrayed the insincerity of the Queen in pretending to take interest in her affairs, replied to the usual inquiry, "No, Madame." This answer instantly recalled to her Majesty's recollection those which the lady had so often given before. "How, madame," said she, "it appears to me that you have several times answered me that you were so; have you been brought to bed?"—"No, Madame; but I was apprehensive of fatiguing your Majesty by con-

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stantly repeating the same thing." From that time she was very coldly received by Maria Leczinska, and had her Majesty possessed more influence, the ambassador might have suffered for his wife's indiscretion. The Queen was affable and modest; but the more she was thankful in her heart to Heaven for having placed her on the first throne in Europe, the more unwilling she was to be reminded of her elevation. This sentiment induced her to insist on the observation of all the forms of respect due to royal birth; whereas in other princes the consciousness of that birth often induces them to disdain the ceremonies of etiquette, and to prefer habits of ease and simplicity. There was a striking contrast in this respect between Maria Leczinska and Marie Antoinette, as has been justly and generally observed. The latter unfortunate Queen, perhaps, carried her disregard of everything belonging to the strict forms of etiquette too far.[1] One

[1] Marie Antoinette has been so often reproached for having derogated from the strictness of old customs, that it is extremely necessary to answer this accusation, once for all, by facts. No prince was ever more jealously observant of the laws of etiquette than Louis XIV., in whose latter years the prudery of Madame de Maintenon rather tended to increase than to weaken this inclination. Let those, therefore, who cannot excuse the slightest infraction of ceremony in Marie Antoinette compare her conduct with that of the Duchess of Burgundy.

"This princess," says the Duchesse d'Orléans, in her Memoirs, "was often entirely alone in her chateau, unattended by any of her people; she would take the arm of one of the young ladies, and walk out without equerries, lady of honour, or tire-woman. At Marly and Versailles she went on foot without a corset; would go into the church, and sit down by the femmes de chambre. At Madame de Maintenon's no distinction of rank

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day, when the Maréchale de Mouchy was teasing her with questions relative to the extent to which she would allow the ladies the option of taking off or wearing their cloaks, and of pinning up the lappets of their caps, or letting them hang down, the Queen replied to her, in my presence: "Arrange all those matters, madame, just as you please; but do not imagine that a Queen, born Archduchess of Austria, can attach that importance to them which might be felt by a Polish princess, who had become Queen of France."

The Polish princess, in truth, never forgave the slightest deviation from the respect due to her person, and to all belonging to her. The Duchesse de ——, a lady of her bed-chamber, who was of an imperious and irritable temper, often drew upon

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was observed, and the whole company seated themselves indiscriminately; she contrived this purposely, that her own rank might not be remarked. At Marly the Dauphiness walked in the garden all night, with the young people, until three or four in the morning. The King knew nothing of these nocturnal excursions." Whence, then, the blame so unjustly thrown on Marie Antoinette, whilst a profound silence is maintained respecting the imprudence, to say no worse, of the Duchess of Burgundy? It is because the excessive mildness of Louis XVI. encouraged audacity and calumny amongst the courtiers, whilst under Louis XIV., on the contrary, the most prompt chastisement would have been the lot of any daring individual who had ventured to point his malignant slanders at a personage placed near the throne. The Duchesse d'Orléans makes this sufficiently evident. "Madame de Maintenon," she adds, "had prohibited the Duchesse du Lude from annoying the Duchess of Burgundy, that she might not put her in an ill-humour; because, when out of temper, the Dauphiness could not divert the King. She had also threatened with her eternal anger whomsoever should dare to accuse the Dauphiness to his Majesty."—*Note by the Editor.*

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herself such petty slights as are constantly shown towards haughty and ill-natured people by the servants of princes, when they can justify those affronts by the plea of their duty, or of the customs of the court. Etiquette, or indeed I might say a sense of propriety, prohibited all persons from laying things belonging to them on the seats of the Queen's chamber. At Versailles, one had to cross this chamber to reach the play-room. The Duchesse de —— laid her cloak on one of the folding-stools, which stood before the balustrade of the bed. The usher of the chamber, whose duty it was to attend to whatever occurred in this room whilst they were at play, saw this cloak, took it, and carried it into the footmen's antechamber. The Queen had a large favourite cat, which was constantly running about the apartments. This satin cloak, lined with fur, appeared very convenient to the cat, who took possession of it accordingly. Unfortunately, he left very unpleasant marks of his preference, which remained but too evident on the white satin of the pelisse, in spite of all the pains that were taken to efface them before it was given to the Duchess. She perceived them, took the cloak in her hand, and returned in a violent passion to the Queen's chamber, where her Majesty remained surrounded by almost all the Court. "Only see, Madame," said she, "the impertinence of *your people*, who have thrown my pelisse on a bench in the antechamber, where your Majesty's cat has served it in this manner!" The Queen, displeased

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at her complaints and familiar expressions, said to her, with the coldest look imaginable : "Know, madame, that it is you, and not I, who keep *people*. I have officers of my chamber who have purchased the honour of serving me, and are persons of good breeding and education; they know the dignity which ought to belong to a lady of the bed-chamber; they are not ignorant that you, who have been chosen from amongst the first ladies of the kingdom, ought to be accompanied by a gentleman, or at least a *valet de chambre* as his substitute, to receive your cloak; and that had you observed the forms suitable to your rank, you would not have been exposed to the mortification of seeing your things thrown on the benches of the antechamber."

Queen Maria Leczinska possessed great talents. Her religious, noble, and resigned conduct, and the refinement and judiciousness of her understanding, sufficiently prove that her august father had promoted with the most tender care the development of all those excellent qualities with which Heaven had endowed her.

The virtues and information of the great are always evinced by their conduct; their accomplishments, coming within the scope of flattery, are difficult to be ascertained by any authentic proofs, and those who have lived near them may be excused for some degree of scepticism with regard to their attainments of this kind. If they draw or paint, there is always an able artist present, who, if he does not absolutely guide the pencil with his own hand,

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directs it by his advice; he sets the palette, and mixes the colours, on which the tones depend. If a princess attempt a piece of embroidery in colours, of that description which ranks amongst the productions of the arts, a skilful embroideress is employed to undo and repair whatever has been spoilt, and to cover the neglected tints with new threads. If the princess be a musician, there are no ears that will discover when she is out of tune; at least there is no tongue that will tell her so. This imperfection in the accomplishments of the great is but a slight misfortune. It is sufficiently meritorious in them to engage in such pursuits, even with indifferent success, because this taste and the protection it extends produce abundance of talent on every side. The Queen delighted in the art of painting, and imagined she herself could draw and paint. She had a drawing-master, who passed all his time in her cabinet. She undertook to paint four large Chinese pictures, with which she wished to ornament her private drawing-room, which was richly furnished with rare porcelain and the finest marbles. This painter was entrusted with the landscape and background of the pictures; he drew the figures with a pencil, the faces and arms were also left by the Queen to his execution; she reserved to herself nothing but the draperies, and the least important accessories. The Queen every morning filled up the outline marked out for her, with a little red, blue, or green colour, which the master prepared on the palette, and even filled her brush with,

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constantly repeating, "Higher up, Madame—lower down, Madame—a little to the right—more to the left." After an hour's work, the time for hearing mass, or some other family or pious duty, would interrupt her Majesty; and the painter, putting the shadows into the draperies she had painted, softening off the colour where she had laid too much, etc., finished the small figures. When the work was completed the private drawing-room was decorated with her Majesty's work; and the firm persuasion of this good Queen that she had painted it herself was so entire that she left this cabinet, with all its furniture and paintings, to the Comtesse de Noailles, her lady of honour. She added to the bequest: "The pictures in my cabinet being my own work, I hope the Comtesse de Noailles will preserve them for my sake." Madame de Noailles, afterwards Maréchale de Mouchy, had a new additional pavilion constructed in her hotel in the Faubourg St. Germain, in order to form a suitable receptacle for the Queen's legacy; and had the following inscription placed over the door, in letters of gold: "The innocent falsehood of a good princess."

The Queen had selected as her intimate friends the Duc, the Duchesse, and the worthy Cardinal de Luynes. She called them her good folks. She often did the Duchess the honour to spend the evening and sup with her. The President Henault was the charm of this pious and virtuous society. This magistrate combined the weighty qualifications of his functions in society with the attainments of a

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man of letters and the polish of a courtier. The Queen one day surprised the Duchess writing to the President, who had just published his *Chronological Abridgment of the History of France.* She took the pen from Madame de Luynes, and wrote at the bottom of the letter this postscript: "I think that M. de Henault, who says a great deal in few words, cannot be very partial to the language of women, who use a vast number of words to say very little." Instead of signing this, she added, "Guess who." The President answered this anonymous epistle by these ingenious lines:[1]

"This sentence, written by a heav'nly hand,
Fills with perplexing doubts my conscious mind;
Presumptuous, if I dare to understand;
Ungrateful, if I fail the truth to find."

One evening the Queen, having entered the cabinet of the Duc de Luynes, took down several books successively, to read the titles. A translation of Ovid's *Art of Love* having fallen into her hands, she replaced it hastily, exclaiming, "Oh, fie!" "How, Madame," said the President, "is that the way in which your Majesty treats the art of pleasing?" "No, Monsieur Henault," answered the Queen, "I should esteem the art of pleasing; it is the art of seducing that I cast from me."

Madame de Civrac, daughter of the Duc d'Aumont, lady of honour to Mesdames, belonged

[1] "Ces mots tracés par une main divine,
Ne peuvent me causer que trouble et qu'embarras.
C'est trop oser, si mon cœur les devine;
C'est être ingrat, s'il ne les devine pas."

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to this intimate circle of the Queen's. Her virtues and amiable character procured her equal esteem and affection in that circle and in her family, from which a premature death removed her. The President Henault paid her a respectful homage, or rather delighted in being the medium of that which that distinguished society eagerly rendered to her talents, her virtues, and her sufferings. Some time before the death of Madame de Civrac she was ordered to try the mineral waters. She left Versailles much debilitated, and in very bad health. The wish to amuse her during a journey which removed her to a distance from all that was dear to her, inspired the President with the idea of an entertainment, which was given to her at every place she stopped to rest at. Her friends set out before her, in order to be a few posts in advance, and prepare their disguises. When she stopped at Bernis, the interesting traveller found a group of lords dressed in the costume of ancient French knights, accompanied by the best musicians of the King's chapel. They sang to Madame de Civrac some stanzas composed by the President, the first of which began thus:[1]

"Can nought your cruel flight impede?
Must distant climes your charms adore?
Why thus to other conquests speed,
And leave our hearts enslav'd before?"

[1] "Quoi! vous partez sans que rien vous arrête!
Vous allez plaire en de nouveaux climats!
Pourquoi voler de conquête en conquête?
Nos cœurs soumis ne suffisent-ils pas?"

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At Nemours the same persons, dressed as village swains and nymphs, presented her with a rural scene, in which they invited her to enjoy the simple pleasures of the country. Elsewhere they appeared as burgesses and their wives, with the mayor and town-clerk, and these disguises, continually varied and enlivened by the amiable ingenuity of the President, followed Madame de Civrac as far as the watering-place to which she was going. I read about this ingenious and affecting entertainment when I was young; I know not whether the manuscript has been preserved by the heirs of the President Henault. The candour and religious simplicity of the good Cardinal formed a striking contrast to the gallant and agreeable character of the President, and people would sometimes divert themselves with his simplicity without forgetting the respect due to him.

One of these instances, however, produced such happy results as to justify the good Cardinal in a singular misapplication of his well-meant piety. Unwilling to forget the homilies which he had composed in his youth, and as jealous of his works as the Archbishop of Grenada, who discharged Gil Blas, the Cardinal used to rise at five in the morning, every Sunday, during the residence of the Court at Fontainebleau (which town was in his diocese), and go to officiate at the parish church, where, mounting the pulpit, he repeated one of his homilies, all of which had been composed to exhort people of rank and fashion to return to the primitive

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simplicity suitable to true Christians. A few hundred peasants, sitting in their sabots, surrounded by the baskets in which they had carried vegetables or fruit to market, listened to his eminence without understanding a single word of what he was saying to them. Some people belonging to the Court, happening to go to mass previously to setting out for Paris, heard his eminence exclaiming, with truly pastoral vehemence: "My dear brethren, why do you carry luxury even to the foot of the sanctuary? Wherefore are these velvet cushions, these bags covered with laces and fringe, carried before you into the temple of the Lord? Abandon these sumptuous and magnificent customs, which you ought to regard as a cumbrous appendage to your rank, and to put away from you when you enter the presence of your divine Saviour." The fashionable hearers of these homilies mentioned them at Court; every one wished to hear them: ladies of the highest rank would be awakened at break of day to hear the Cardinal say mass; and thus his eminence became speedily surrounded by a congregation to which his homilies were perfectly adapted.

Maria Leczinska could never look with cordiality on the Princess of Saxony, who married the Dauphin; but the attention, respect, and cautious behaviour of the Dauphiness at length made her Majesty forget that the princess was the daughter of a King who wore her father's crown. Nevertheless, when the great entertain a deep resentment, some marks of it will occasionally be observed by

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those who constantly surround them; and although the Queen now saw in the Princess of Saxony only a wife beloved by her son, and the mother of the prince destined to succeed to the throne; she never could forget that Augustus wore the crown of Stanislaus. One day an officer of her chamber having undertaken to ask a private audience of her for the Saxon minister, and the Queen being unwilling to grant it, he persisted in his request, and ventured to add that he should not have presumed to ask this favour of the Queen had not the minister been the ambassador of a member of the family. "Say of an *enemy* of the family," replied the Queen angrily; "and let him come in."

The Queen was very partial to the Princesse de Tallard, governess of the children of France. This lady, having attained an advanced age, came to take leave of her Majesty, and to acquaint her with the resolution she had taken to quit the world, and to place an interval between her life and dissolution. The Queen expressed much regret, endeavoured to dissuade her from this scheme, and, much affected at the thoughts of the sacrifice on which the princess had determined, asked her whither she intended to retire. "To the *entresols* of my hotel, Madame," answered Madame de Tallard.

Comte de Tessé, father of the last count of that name, who left no children, was first equerry to Queen Maria Leczinska. She esteemed his virtues, but often diverted herself at the expense of his simplicity. One day, when the conversation

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turned on the noble military actions by which the French nobility was distinguished, the Queen said to the Count: "And your family, M. de Tessé, has been famous, too, in the field." "Ah! Madame, we have all been killed in our masters' service!" "How rejoiced I am," replied the Queen, "that you have revived to tell me of it." The son of this worthy M. de Tessé was married to the amiable and highly-gifted daughter of the Duc d'Ayen, afterwards Maréchale de Noailles. He was excessively fond of his daughter-in-law, and never could speak of her without emotion. The Queen, to please him, often talked to him about the young countess, and one day asked him which of her good qualities seemed to him most conspicuous. "Her gentleness, Madame, her gentleness," said he, with tears in her eyes; "she is so mild, so soft—as soft as a good carriage." "Well," said her Majesty, "that's an excellent comparison for a first equerry."

In 1730 Queen Maria Leczinska going to mass met old Marshal Villars, leaning on a wooden crutch, not worth fifteen pence. She rallied him about it, and the Marshal told her that he had used it ever since he had received a wound which obliged him to add this article to the equipments of the army. Her Majesty, smiling, said she thought this crutch so unworthy of him that she hoped to induce him to give it up. On returning home she despatched M. Campan to Paris with orders to purchase at the celebrated Germain's the handsomest cane, with a gold enamelled crutch, that he could

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find, and carry it without delay to Marshal Villars' hotel, and present it to him from her. He was announced accordingly, and fulfilled his commission. The Marshal, in attending him to the door, requested him to express his gratitude to the Queen, and said, that he had nothing fit to offer to an officer who had the honour to belong to her Majesty; but he begged him to accept of his old stick, and that his grandchildren would probably some day be glad to possess the cane with which he had commanded at Marchiennes and Denain. The known character of Marshal Villars appears in this anecdote; but he was not mistaken with respect to the estimation in which his stick would be held. It was thenceforth kept with veneration by M. Campan's family. On the 10th of August 1792 a house which I occupied on the Carrousel, at the entrance of the court of the Tuileries, was pillaged and nearly burned down. The cane of Marshal Villars was thrown into the Carrousel as of no value, and picked up by my servant. Had its old master been living at that period we should not have witnessed such a deplorable day.

The Queen's father died in consequence of being severely burnt by his fireside. Like almost all old men, he disliked those attentions which imply the decay of the faculties, and had ordered a *valet de chambre*, who wished to remain near him, to withdraw into the adjoining room; a spark set fire to a taffety dressing-gown wadded with cotton, which his daughter had sent him. The poor old prince, who entertained hopes of recovering from the

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frightful state into which this accident reduced him, wished to inform the Queen of it himself, and wrote her a letter evincing the playfulness of his disposition, as well as the courage of his soul, in which he said: "What consoles me is the reflection that I am burning for you." To the last moment of her life Maria Leczinska never parted with this letter, and her women often surprised her kissing a paper, which they concluded to be this last farewell of Stanislaus.[1]

[1] This anecdote does honour to the heart and filial piety of Maria Leczinska. That princess was equally gifted with wit and sensibility, if we may judge by many expressions which fell from her lips in conversation, and have been collected by the Abbé Proyart. Many of them are remarkable for the depth of thought they display, and frequently for an ingenious and lively turn of expression:—

"We should not be great but for the little. We ought to be so only for their good."

"To be vain of one's rank is to declare one's self beneath it."

"A king who enforces respect to God has no occasion to command homage to be paid to himself."

"The mercy of kings is to do justice; and the justice of queens is to exercise mercy."

"Good kings are slaves, and their subjects are free."

"Content seldom travels with fortune, but follows virtue even in adversity."

"Solitude can be delightful only to the innocent."

"To consider one's self great on account of rank and wealth is to imagine that the pedestal makes the hero."

"Many princes when dying have lamented having made war; we hear of none who at that moment have regretted having loved peace."

"Sensible people judge of a head by what it contains; frivolous women by what is on the outside of it."

"Courtiers cry out to us, '*Give us without reckoning!*' and the people, '*Reckon what we give you!*'"

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CHAPTER I.

Court of Louis XV.—His character—The King's *débotter*—Characters of Mesdames—Retreat of Madame Louise to the Carmelites of Saint Denis—Madame du Barry—The Court divided between the party of the Duc de Choiseul and that of the Duc d'Aiguillon.

I WAS fifteen years of age when I was appointed reader to Mesdames. I will begin by describing the Court at that period.

Marie Leczinska was just dead; the death of the Dauphin had preceded hers by three years; the Jesuits were suppressed, and piety was to be found at Court only in the apartments of Mesdames. The Duc de Choiseul ruled.

The King thought of nothing but the pleasures of the chase; it might have been imagined that the courtiers indulged themselves in making epigrams by hearing them say seriously on those days when the King did not hunt, *The King does nothing to-day.*

Little journeys were also affairs of great importance with the King. On the first day of the year he noted down in his almanac the days of departure for Compiègne, Fontainebleau, Choisy, etc. The

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weightiest matters, the most serious events, never deranged this distribution of his time.

Etiquette still existed at Court with all the forms it had acquired under Louis XIV.; dignity alone was wanting. As to gaiety, there was none. Versailles was not the place at which to seek for assemblies where French spirit and grace were displayed. The focus of wit and intelligence was Paris.

Since the death of the Marquise de Pompadour, the King had had no titled mistress; he contented himself with his *seraglio* in the Parc-aux-Cerfs. It is well known that the monarch found the separation of Louis de Bourbon from the King of France the most animating feature of his royal existence. *They would have it so; they thought it for the best,* was his way of expressing himself when the measures of his ministers were unsuccessful. The King delighted to manage the most disgraceful points of his private expenses himself; he one day sold to a head clerk in the war department a house in which one of his mistresses had lodged; the contract ran in the name of Louis de Bourbon; and the purchaser himself took in a bag the price of the house in gold to the King in his private closet.[1]

[1] Until recently little was known about the Parc-aux-Cerfs, and it was believed that a great number of girls had been maintained there at enormous expense. The investigations of M. J. A. Le Roi, Conservateur de la Bibliothèque de Versailles, given in his interesting work, *Curiosités Historiques sur Louis XIII., Louis XIV., Louis XV.*, etc., Paris, Plon, 1864, have cleared up the matter, the result he arrives at (see page 229 of

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Louis XV. saw very little of his family; he came every morning by a private staircase into the apartment of Madame Adelaide.[1] He often brought and drank there coffee that he had made himself.

his work) is that the house in question was No. 4 Rue Saint Médéric in the quarter built on the site of the Parc-aux-Cerfs, or breeding-place for deer, of Louis XIII.; in 1755 this house was very small, and placed in a lane which was not a thoroughfare, and with only one house near it, and that without windows in its direction; it belonged to Jean Michel Denis Crémer, a bourgeois of Paris, and on 25th November 1755 was bought by an usher of the Châtelet of Paris, François Vallet, who the same day declared before notaries that the purchase had really been made by the King—*Pour et au profit du Roi.* The house was held by the King from 1755 to 1771. It has since been enlarged, but at that time was very small, and could only have held one girl, the woman in charge of her, and a servant. Most of the girls only left it when about to be confined, and it sometimes stood vacant for five or six months. It may have been rented before the date of purchase, and other houses seem sometimes to have been used also; but in any case, it is evident that both the number of girls and the expense incurred have been absurdly exaggerated. The system flourished under Madame de Pompadour, but ceased as soon as Madame du Barry obtained full power over the King, and the house was then sold to M. J. B. Sévin for 16,000 livres, on 27th May 1771,—Louis not acting under the name of *Louis de Bourbon*, but as King: *Vente par le Roi, notre Sire.* Thus, in this case at least, Madame Campan is in error in saying that the King made the contract as Louis de Bourbon.

[1] Louis XV. seemed to feel for Madame Adelaide the tenderness he had had for the Duchess of Burgundy, his mother, who perished so suddenly under the eyes and almost in the arms of Louis XIV. The birth of Madame Adelaide, 23d March 1732, was followed by that of Madame Victoire-Louise-Marie-Thérèse on the 11th May 1773. Louis had, besides, six daughters, Mesdames Sophie and Louise, who are mentioned in this chapter; the Princesses Marie and Felicité, who died young; Madame Henriette, died at Versailles in 1752, aged twenty-four; and finally, Madame the Duchess of Parma, who also died at the Court. See the *Life of Maria Leczinska* by the Abbé Proyart.—*Note by the Editor.*

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Madame Adelaide pulled a bell which apprised Madame Victoire of the King's visit; Madame Victoire, on rising to go to her sister's apartment, rang for Madame Sophie, who in her turn rang for Madame Louise. The apartments of Mesdames were of very large dimensions. Madame Louise occupied the farthest room. This latter lady was deformed and very short; the poor Princess used to run with all her might to join the daily meeting, but, having a number of rooms to cross, she frequently, in spite of her haste, had only just time to embrace her father before he set out for the chase.

Every evening at six Mesdames interrupted my reading to them to accompany the Princes to Louis XV.; this visit was called the King's *débotter*,[1] and was marked by a kind of etiquette. Mesdames put on an enormous hoop, which set out a petticoat ornamented with gold or embroidery; they fastened a long train round their waists, and concealed the undress of the rest of their clothing by a long cloak of black taffety which enveloped them up to the chin. The *chevaliers d'honneur*, the ladies-in-waiting, the pages, the equerries, and the ushers bearing large flambeaux, accompanied them to the King. In a moment the whole palace, generally so still, was in motion; the King kissed each Princess on the forehead, and the visit was so short that the reading which it interrupted was frequently resumed at the end of a quarter of an hour; Mesdames returned to their apartments, and untied the strings

[1] *Débotter*, meaning the time of unbooting.

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of their petticoats and trains; they resumed their tapestry and I my book.

During the summer season the King sometimes came to the residence of Mesdames before the hour of his *débotter*. One day he found me alone in Madame Victoire's closet, and asked me where *Coche*[1] was; I stared, and he repeated his question, but without being at all the more understood. When the King was gone I asked Madame of whom he spoke. She told me that it was herself, and very coolly explained to me, that being the fattest of his daughters, the King had given her the familiar name of *Coche*, that he called Madame Adelaide, *Loque*,[2] Madame Sophie, *Graille*,[3] and Madame Louise, *Chiffe*.[4] The people of the King's household observed that he knew a great number of such words; possibly he had amused himself with picking them out from dictionaries. If this style of speaking betrayed the habits and tastes of the King, his manner savoured nothing of such vulgarity; his walk was easy and noble, he had a dignified carriage of the head, and his aspect, without being severe, was imposing; he combined great politeness with a truly regal demeanour, and gracefully saluted the humblest female whom curiosity led into his path.

He was very expert in a number of trifling matters which never occupy attention but when there is a lack of something better to employ it; for

[1] Meaning an old sow, or a fat woman.
[2] Rag. [3] Scrap. [4] Bad silk or stuff.

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instance, he would knock off the top of an egg-shell at a single stroke of his fork, he therefore always ate eggs when he dined in public, and the Parisians who came on Sundays to see the King dine, returned home less struck with his fine figure than with the dexterity with which he broke his eggs.

Repartees of Louis XV., which marked the keenness of his wit and the elevation of his sentiments, were quoted with pleasure in the assemblies of Versailles.

This Prince was still beloved; it was wished that a style of life suitable to his age and dignity should at length supersede the errors of the past, and justify the love of his subjects. It was painful to judge him harshly. If he had established avowed mistresses at Court, the uniform devotion of the Queen was blamed for it. Mesdames were reproached for not seeking to prevent the King's forming an intimacy with some new favourite. Madame Henriette, twin sister of the Duchess of Parma, was much regretted, for she had considerable influence over the King's mind, and it was remarked that if she had lived she would have been assiduous in finding him amusements in the bosom of his family, would have followed him in his short excursions, and would have done the honours of the *petits soupers* which he was so fond of giving in his private apartments.

Mesdames too much neglected the means of pleasing the King, but the cause of that was obvious in the little attention he had paid them in their youth.

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In order to console the people under their sufferings, and to shut their eyes to the real depredations on the treasury, the ministers occasionally pressed the most extravagant measures of reform in the King's household, and even in his personal expenses.

Cardinal Fleury, who in truth had the merit of re-establishing the finances, carried this system of economy so far as to obtain from the King the suppression of the household of the four younger Princesses. They were brought up as mere boarders in a convent eighty leagues distant from the court. Saint Cyr would have been more suitable for the reception of the King's daughters; but probably the Cardinal shared some of those prejudices which will always attach to even the most useful institutions; and which, since the death of Louis XIV., had been raised against the noble establishment of Madame de Maintenon. Madame Louise often assured me that at twelve years of age she was not mistress of the whole alphabet, and never learned to read fluently until after her return to Versailles.

Madame Victoire attributed certain paroxysms of terror, which she was never able to conquer, to the violent alarms she experienced at the Abbey of Fontevrault, whenever she was sent, by way of penance, to pray alone in the vault where the sisters were interred.

A gardener belonging to the abbey died raving mad. His habitation, without the walls, was near a

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chapel of the abbey, where Mesdames were taken to repeat the prayers for those in the agonies of death. Their prayers were more than once interrupted by the shrieks of the dying man.

The most absurd indulgences were mixed with these cruel practices. Madame Adelaide, the eldest of the Princesses, was haughty and passionate; the good sisters never failed to give way to her ridiculous fancies. The dancing-master, the only professor of graceful accomplishments who had followed Mesdames to Fontevrault, was teaching them a dance then much in fashion, which was called the *rose-coloured minuet.* Madame Adelaide insisted that it should be named *the blue minuet.* The teacher resisted her whim, and urged that he should be laughed at at Court if the Princess should talk of a *blue minuet.* The Princess refused to take her lesson, stamped, and repeated, "*Blue, blue.*" "*Rose, rose,*" said the master. The sisterhood assembled to decide the important case; the nuns cried "*Blue*" with the Princess; the minuet was re-christened, and she danced. Among women so little worthy of the office of instructress, there was, however, one sister who, by her judicious tenderness, and by the useful proofs which she gave of it to Mesdames, entitled herself to their attachment, and obtained their gratitude; this was Madame de Soulanges, whom they afterwards caused to be appointed Abbess of Royal-Lieu.[1] They also took upon them-

[1] This excellent woman fell a victim to the Revolutionary madness. She and her numerous sisters were led to the scaffold

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selves the promotion of this lady's nephews; those of the Mother MacCarthy, who had weakly indulged her charges, carried for a long time the musket of the King's Guard at the door of Mesdames without the latter thinking of advancing their fortune.

When Mesdames, still very young, returned to Court, they enjoyed the friendship of Monseigneur the Dauphin, and profited by his advice. They devoted themselves ardently to study, and gave up almost the whole of their time to it; they enabled themselves to write French correctly, and acquired a good knowledge of history. Italian, English, the higher branches of mathematics, turning and dialling, filled up in succession their leisure moments. Madame Adelaide, in particular, had a most insatiable desire to learn; she was taught to play upon all instruments, from the horn (will it be believed!) to the Jew's harp.

Madame Adelaide was graced for a short time with a charming figure; but never did beauty so quickly vanish. Madame Victoire was handsome and very graceful; her address, mien, and smile were in perfect accordance with the goodness of her heart. Madame Sophie was remarkably ugly; never did I behold a person with so unprepossess-

on the same day. While leaving the prison, they all chanted the *Veni Creator* upon the fatal car. When arrived at the place of punishment, they did not interrupt their strains. One head fell, and ceased to mix its voice with the celestial chorus—but the strain continued. The abbess suffered last; and her single voice, with increased tone, still raised the devout versicle. It ceased suddenly — it was the silence of death! — *Madame Campan.*

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ing an appearance; she walked with the greatest rapidity; and, in order to recognise the people who placed themselves along her path without looking at them, she acquired the habit of leering on one side, like a hare. This Princess was so exceedingly diffident that a person might be with her daily for years together without hearing her utter a single word. It was asserted, however, that she displayed talent, and even amiability, in the society of some favourite ladies. She taught herself a great deal, but she studied alone; the presence of a reader would have disconcerted her very much. There were, however, occasions on which the Princess, generally so intractable, became all at once affable and condescending, and manifested the most communicative good nature; this would happen during a storm; so great was her alarm on such an occasion that she then approached the most humble, and would ask them a thousand obliging questions; a flash of lightning made her squeeze their hands; a peal of thunder would drive her to embrace them, but with the return of the calm, the Princess resumed her stiffness, her reserve, and her repulsive air, and passed all by without taking the slightest notice of any one, until a fresh storm restored to her at once her dread and her affability.

Mesdames found in a beloved brother, whose rare attainments are known to all Frenchmen, a guide in everything wanting to their education. In their august mother, Maria Leczinska, they possessed the noblest example of every pious and social virtue;

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that Princess, by her eminent qualities and her modest dignity, veiled the failings of the King, and while she lived she preserved in the Court of Louis XV. that decorous and dignified tone which alone secures the respect due to power. The Princesses, her daughters, were worthy of her; and if a few degraded beings did aim the shafts of calumny at them, these shafts dropped harmless, warded off by the elevation of their sentiments and the purity of their conduct.

If Mesdames had not tasked themselves with numerous occupations, they would have been much to be pitied. They loved walking, but could enjoy nothing beyond the public gardens of Versailles; they would have cultivated flowers, but could have no others than those in their windows.

The Marquise de Durfort, since Duchesse de Civrac,[1] afforded to Madame Victoire agreeable society. The Princess spent almost all her evenings with that lady, and ended by fancying herself domiciled with her.

Madame de Narbonne had, in a similar way, taken pains to make her intimate acquaintance pleasant to Madame Adelaide.

Madame Louise had for many years lived in great seclusion; I read to her five hours a day; my voice frequently betrayed the exhaustion of my lungs,

[1] Grandmother of two heroes of La Vendée, Lescure and La Roche-Jaquelin, by the marriage of her eldest daughter with M. d'Onissan; and of the unfortunate Labédoyère, by the marriage of her second daughter with M. de Chastellux.—*Madame Campan.*

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the Princess would then prepare sugared water for me, place it by me, and apologise for making me read so long, on the score of having prescribed a course of reading for herself.

One evening, while I was reading, she was informed that M. Bertin, *ministre des parties casuelles*, desired to speak with her; she went out abruptly, returned, resumed her silks and embroidery, and made me resume my book; when I retired she commanded me to be in her closet the next morning at eleven o'clock. When I got there the Princess was gone out; I learned that she had gone at seven in the morning to the Convent of the Carmelites of Saint Denis, where she was desirous of taking the veil. I went to Madame Victoire; there I heard that the King alone had been acquainted with Madame Louise's project; that he had kept it faithfully secret, and that, having long previously opposed her wish, he had only on the preceding evening sent her his consent; that she had gone alone into the convent, where she was expected; and that a few minutes afterwards she had made her appearance at the grating, to show the Princesse de Guistel, who had accompanied her to the convent-gate, and to her equerry, the King's order to leave her in the monastery.

Upon receiving the intelligence of her sister's departure, Madame Adelaide gave way to violent paroxysms of rage, and reproached the King bitterly for the secret, which he had thought it his duty to preserve. Madame Victoire missed the

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society of her favourite sister, but she only shed tears in silence. The first time I saw this excellent Princess after Madame Louise's departure, I threw myself at her feet, kissed her hand, and asked her, with all the confidence of youth, whether she would quit us as Madame Louise had done. She raised me, embraced me, and said, pointing to the lounge upon which she was extended, "Make yourself easy, my dear; I shall never have Louise's courage. I love the conveniences of life too well; *this lounge is my destruction.*" As soon as I obtained permission to do so, I went to Saint Denis to see my late mistress; she deigned to receive me with her face uncovered, in her private parlour; she told me she had just left the wash-house, and that it was her turn that day to attend to the linen. "I much abused your youthful lungs for two years before the execution of my project," added she, "I knew that here I could read none but books tending to our salvation, and I wished to review all the historians that had interested me."

She informed me that the King's consent for her to go to Saint Denis had been brought to her while I was reading; she prided herself, and with reason, upon having returned to her closet without the slightest mark of agitation, though she said she felt so keenly that she could scarcely regain her chair. She added that moralists were right when they said that happiness does not dwell in palaces; that she had proved it; and that, if I desired to be happy, she advised me to come and enjoy a retreat

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in which the liveliest imagination might find full exercise in the contemplation of a better world. I had no palace, no earthly grandeur to sacrifice to God; nothing but the bosom of a united family; and it is precisely there that the moralists whom she cited have placed true happiness. I replied that, in private life, the absence of a beloved and cherished daughter would be too cruelly felt by her family. The Princess said no more on the subject.[1]

The seclusion of Madame Louise was attributed to various motives; some were unkind enough to suppose it to have been occasioned by her mortification at being, in point of rank, the last of the Princesses. I think I penetrated the true cause.

Her soul was lofty; she loved everything sublime; often while I was reading she would interrupt

[1] *Les Souvenirs de Félicie* contain the account of a visit to Saint Denis made by Madame de Genlis :—"Madame Louise permitted questions, and answered them shortly but kindly. I wanted to know what in her new state she found the hardest to accustom herself to. 'You would never guess it,' answered she, smiling; 'it is to descend alone a back staircase. At first,' added she, 'it was to me the most fearful precipice. I was obliged to seat myself on the steps, and slide down in order to descend.' In fact, a Princess who had only descended the grand marble staircase of Versailles, leaning on the arm of her *chevalier d'honneur*, and surrounded by her pages, would tremble at finding herself left alone on a steep spiral staircase. She knew long before all the austerities of the religious life. For ten years she had secretly practised most of them in the Château of Versailles, but she had never thought of small staircases. This may well cause reflection on the education, ridiculous on so many accounts, that persons of this rank generally receive, who, always followed, helped, escorted, prompted, guarded from their childhood, are thus deprived of the greatest part of the faculties that nature has given them."

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me to exclaim, "That is beautiful! that is noble!" There was but one brilliant action that she could perform—to quit a palace for a cell, and rich garments for a stuff gown. She achieved it.

I saw Madame Louise two or three times more at the grating. I was informed of her death by Louis XVI. "My aunt Louise," said he to me, "your old mistress, is just dead at Saint Denis. I have this moment received intelligence of it. Her piety and resignation were admirable, and yet the delirium of my good aunt recalled to her recollection that she was a princess, for her last words were, '*To paradise, haste, haste, full speed.*' No doubt she thought she was again giving orders to her equerry."[1]

Madame Victoire, good, sweet-tempered, and affable, lived with the most amiable simplicity in a

[1] The retirement of Madame Louise, and her removal from Court, had only served to give her up entirely to the intrigues of the clergy. She received incessant visits from bishops, archbishops, and ambitious priests of every rank; she prevailed on the King, her father, to grant many ecclesiastical preferments, and probably looked forward to playing an important part when the King, weary of his licentious course of life, should begin to think of religion. This, perhaps, might have been the case had not a sudden and unexpected death put an end to his career. The project of Madame Louise fell to the ground in consequence of this event. She remained in her convent, from whence she continued to solicit favours, as I knew from the complaints of the Queen, who often said to me, "Here is another letter from my aunt Louise. She is certainly the most intriguing little Carmelite in the kingdom." The Court went to visit her about three times a year, and I recollect that the Queen, intending to take her daughter there, ordered me to get a doll dressed like a Carmelite for her, that the young Princess might be accustomed, before she went into the convent, to the habit of her aunt the nun.—*Madame Campan.*

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society wherein she was much caressed: she was adored by her household. Without quitting Versailles, without sacrificing her easy chair, she fulfilled the duties of religion with punctuality, gave to the poor all that she possessed, and strictly observed Lent and the fasts. The table of Mesdames acquired a reputation for dishes of abstinence, spread abroad by the assiduous parasites at that of their *maître d'hotel.* Madame Victoire was not indifferent to good living, but she had the most religious scruples respecting dishes of which it was allowable to partake at penitential times. I saw her one day exceedingly tormented by her doubts about a water-fowl, which was often served up to her during Lent. The question to be determined was, whether it was *maigre* or *gras.* She consulted a bishop, who happened to be of the party: the prelate immediately assumed the grave attitude of a judge who is about to pronounce sentence. He answered the Princess that, in a similar case of doubt, it had been resolved that after dressing the bird it should be pricked over a very cold silver dish: if the gravy of the animal congealed within a quarter of an hour, the creature was to be accounted flesh; but if the gravy remained in an oily state, it might be eaten without scruple. Madame Victoire immediately made the experiment: the gravy did not congeal; and this was a source of great joy to the Princess, who was very partial to that sort of game. The abstinence which so much occupied the attention of

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Madame Victoire was so disagreeable to her, that she listened with impatience for the midnight hour of Holy Saturday being struck; and then she was immediately supplied with a good dish of fowl and rice, and sundry other succulent viands. She confessed with such amiable candour her taste for good cheer and the comforts of life, that it would have been necessary to be as severe in principle as insensible to the excellent qualities of the Princess, to consider it a crime in her.

Madame Adelaide had more mind than Madame Victoire; but she was altogether deficient in that kindness which alone creates affection for the great: abrupt manners, a harsh voice, and a short way of speaking, rendered her more than imposing. She carried the idea of the prerogative of rank to a high pitch. One of her chaplains was unlucky enough to say *Dominus vobiscum* with rather too easy an air: the Princess rated him soundly for it after mass, and told him to remember that he was not a bishop, and not again to think of officiating in the style of a prelate.

Mesdames lived quite separate from the King. Since the death of Madame de Pompadour he had lived alone. The enemies of the Duc de Choiseul did not know in what department, nor through what channel they could prepare and bring about the downfall of the man who stood in their way, The King was connected only with women of so low a class that they could not be made use of for any delicate intrigue; moreover the Parc-aux-Cerfs was a seraglio,

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the beauties of which were often replaced; it was desirable to give the King a mistress who could form a circle, and in whose drawing-room the long-standing attachment of the King for the Duc de Choiseul might be overcome. It is true that Madame du Barry was selected from a class sufficiently low. Her origin, her education, her habits, and everything about her bore a character of vulgarity and shamelessness; but by marrying her to a man whose pedigree dated from 1400, it was thought scandal would be avoided. The conqueror of Mahon conducted this coarse intrigue.[1] Such a mistress was judiciously selected for the diversion of the latter years of a man weary of grandeur, fatigued with pleasure, and cloyed with voluptuousness. Neither the wit, the talents, the graces of the Marquise de Pompadour, her beauty, nor even her love for the King, would have had any further influence over that worn-out being.

He wanted a Roxalana of familiar gaiety, without any respect for the dignity of the sovereign. Madame du Barry one day so far forgot propriety

[1] It appeared at this period as if every feeling of dignity was lost. "Few noblemen of the French Court," says a writer of the time, "preserved themselves from the general corruption. The Maréchal de Brissac was one of the latter. He was bantered on the strictness of his principles of honour and honesty; it was thought strange that he should be offended at being thought, like so many others, exposed to hymeneal disgrace. Louis XV., who was present, and laughed at his angry fit, said to him: 'Come, M. de Brissac, don't be angry; 'tis but a trifling evil; take courage.' 'Sire,' replied M. de Brissac, 'I possess all kinds of courage, except that which can brave shame.'"—*Note by the Editor.*

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as to desire to be present at a Council of State. The King was weak enough to consent to it. There she remained ridiculously perched upon the arm of his chair, playing all sorts of childish monkey tricks, calculated to please an old sultan.

Another time she snatched a packet of sealed letters from the King's hand. Among them she had observed one from Comte de Broglie. She told the King that she knew that rascal Broglie spoke ill of her to him, and that for once, at least, she would make sure he should read nothing respecting her. The King wanted to get the packet again; she resisted, and made him run two or three times round the table, which was in the middle of the council-chamber, and then, on passing the fireplace, she threw the letters into the grate, where they were consumed. The King became furious: he seized his audacious mistress by the arm, and put her out of the door without speaking to her. Madame du Barry thought herself utterly disgraced; she returned home, and remained two hours, alone, abandoned to the utmost distress. The King went to her: she threw herself at his feet, in tears, and he pardoned her.

Madame la Maréchale de Beauvau, the Duchesse de Choiseul, and the Duchesse de Grammont had renounced the honour of the King's intimate acquaintance rather than share it with Madame du Barry. But a few years after the death of Louis XV., Madame la Maréchale, being alone at the Val, a house belonging to M. de Beauvau, Mademoiselle

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de Dillon saw the Countess's calash take shelter in the forest of Saint Germain during a violent storm. She invited her in, and the Countess herself related these particulars, which I had from Madame de Beauvau.[1]

The Comte du Barry, surnamed *le roué* (the profligate), and Mademoiselle du Barry[2] advised, or rather prompted, Madame du Barry in furtherance of the plans of the party of the Maréchal de Richelieu and the Duc d'Aiguillon. Sometimes they even set her to act in such a way as to have a useful influence upon great political measures. Under pretence that the page who accompanied Charles I. in his flight was a *du Barry* or *Barrymore*, they persuaded the Comtesse du Barry to buy in London that fine portrait which we now have in the Museum. She had the picture placed in her drawing-room, and when she saw the King hesitating upon the violent measure of breaking up his Parliament, and forming

[1] Chamfort gives a different version of Madame du Barry's visit to the Val. "Madame du Barry," says he, "being at Vincennes, was curious to see the Val. Madame de Beauvau was amused at the idea of going there and doing the honours. She talked of what had happened under Louis XV. Madame du Barry was complaining of various matters, which appeared to show that she was personally detested. 'By no means,' said Madame de Beauvau, 'we aimed at nothing but your place.' After this frank confession Madame du Barry was asked if Louis XV. did not say a great deal against her (Madame de Beauvau) and Madame de Grammont. 'Oh! a great deal.'—'Well, and what of me, for instance?'—'Of you, madame? That you are haughty and intriguing, and that you lead your husband by the nose.' M. de Beauvau was present. The conversation was soon changed."—*Note by the Editor.*

[2] The Comte Jean du Barry and Mademoiselle Claire du Barry, brother and sister-in law of Madame du Barry.

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that which was called the Maupeou Parliament, she desired him to look at the portrait of a king who had given way to his Parliament.[1]

[1] The *Memoirs of General Dumouriez*, vol. i., page 142, contain some curious particulars about Madame du Barry; and novel details respecting her will be found at page 243 of *Curiosités Historiques*, by J. A. Le Roi (Paris, Plon, 1864). His investigations lead to the result that her real name was Jeanne Bécu, born, 19th August 1743, at Vaucouleurs, the natural daughter of Anne Bécu, otherwise known as "Quantiny." Her mother afterwards married Nicolas Rancon. Comte Jean du Barry met her among the demi-monde, and succeeded, about 1767, and by the help of his friend Lebel, the *valet de chambre* of Louis XV., in introducing her to the King under the name of "Mademoiselle l'Ange." To be formally mistress a husband had to be found. The Comte Jean du Barry, already married himself, found no difficulty in getting his brother, Comte Guillaume, a poor officer of the marine troops, to accept the post of husband. In the marriage-contract, signed on 23d July 1768, she was described as the daughter of Anne Bécu and of an imaginary first husband, "Sieur Jean-Jacques Gomard de Vaubernier," and three years were taken off her age. The marriage-contract was so drawn as to leave Madame du Barry entirely free from all control by her husband. The marriage was solemnised on 1st September 1768, after which the nominal husband returned to Toulouse. Madame du Barry in later years provided for him; and in 1772, tired of his applications, she obtained an act of separation from him. He married later Jeanne Madeleine Lemoine, and died in 1811. Madame du Barry took care of her mother, who figured as Madame de Montrable. In all she received from the King, Monsieur Le Roi calculates, about twelve and a half million of livres. On the death of Louis XV. she had to retire first to the Abbey of Pont-aux-Dames, near Meaux, then she was allowed to go to her small house at Saint Vrain, near Arpajon, and finally, in 1775, to her château at Louveciennes. Much to her credit be it said, she retained many of her friends, and was on the most intimate terms till his death with the Duc de Brissac (Louis-Hercule-Timoléon de Cossé-Brissac), who was killed at Versailles in the massacre of the prisoners in September 1792, leaving at his death a large legacy to her. Even the Emperor Joseph visited her. In 1791 many of her jewels were stolen and taken to England. This caused her to make several visits to that country, where she gained her suit. But these visits, though she took

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The men of ambition who were labouring to overthrow the Duc de Choiseul strengthened themselves by their concentration at the house of the favourite, and succeeded in their project. The bigots, who never forgave that minister the suppression of the Jesuits, and who had always been hostile to a treaty of alliance with Austria, influenced the minds of Mesdames. The Duc de La Vauguyon, the young Dauphin's governor, infected them with the same prejudices.

Such was the state of the public mind when the young Archduchess Marie Antoinette arrived at the Court of Versailles, just at the moment when the party which brought her there was about to be overthrown.

Madame Adelaide openly avowed her dislike to a princess of the House of Austria; and when M. Campan went to receive his orders, at the moment of setting off with the household of the Dauphiness, to go and receive the Archduchess upon the frontiers, she said she disapproved of the marriage of her nephew with an archduchess; and that, if she had the direction of the matter, she would not send for an Austrian.

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every precaution to legalise them, ruined her. Betrayed by her servants, among them by Zamor, the negro page, she was brought before the Revolutionary tribunal, and was guillotined on 8th December 1793, in a frenzy of terror, calling for mercy and for delay up to the moment when her head fell.

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CHAPTER II.

Birth of Marie Antoinette attended by a memorable calamity—Maria Theresa's character—Education of the Archduchesses—Preceptors provided for Marie Antoinette by the Court of Vienna—Preceptor sent her by the Court of France—Abbé de Vermond—Change in the French Ministry—Cardinal de Rohan succeeds Baron de Breteuil as Ambassador at Vienna—Portrait of that Prelate.

MARIE-ANTOINETTE-JOSÈPHE-JEANNE DE LORRAINE, Archduchess of Austria, daughter of Francis of Lorraine and of Maria Theresa, was born on the 2d of November 1755, the day of the earthquake at Lisbon; and this catastrophe, which appeared to stamp the era of her birth with a fatal mark, without forming a motive for superstitious fear with the Princess, nevertheless made an impression upon her mind. As the Empress already had a great number of daughters, she ardently desired to have another son, and playfully wagered against her wish with the Duc de Tarouka, who had insisted that she would give birth to an archduke. He lost by the birth of the Princess, and had executed in porcelain a figure with one knee bent on the earth, and presenting tablets, upon which the following verses by the celebrated Metastasio were engraved:—

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"I lose by your fair daughter's birth
Who prophesied a son—
But if she share her mother's worth,
Why, all the world has won!"[1]

The Queen was fond of talking of the first years of her youth. Her father, the Emperor Francis, had made a deep impression upon her heart; she lost him when she was scarcely seven years old. One of those circumstances which fix themselves strongly in the memories of children frequently recalled his last caresses to her. The Emperor was setting out for Innspruck; he had already left his palace, when he ordered a gentleman to fetch the Archduchess Marie Antoinette, and bring her to his carriage. When she came, he stretched out his arms to receive her, and said, after having pressed her to his bosom, "I wanted to embrace this child once more." The Emperor died suddenly during the journey, and never saw his beloved daughter again.

The Queen often spoke of her mother, and with profound respect, but she based all her schemes for the education of her children on the essentials which had been neglected in her own. Maria Theresa, who inspired awe by her great qualities, taught the Archduchesses to fear and respect rather than to love her; at least I observed this in the Queen's feelings towards her august mother. She therefore

[1] "Io perdei: l'augusta figlia
A pagar m'a condannato;
Ma s'è ver che a voi somiglia,
Tutto il mondo ha guadagnato."

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never desired to place between her own children and herself that distance which had existed in the imperial family. She cited a fatal consequence of it, which had made such a powerful impression upon her that time had never been able to efface it.

The wife of the Emperor Joseph II. was taken from him in a few days by an attack of smallpox of the worst kind. Her coffin had recently been deposited in the vault of the imperial family. The Archduchess Josepha, who had been betrothed to the King of Naples, at the instant she was quitting Vienna received an order from the Empress not to set off without having offered up a prayer in the vault of her forefathers. The Archduchess, persuaded that she should take the disorder to which her sister-in-law had just fallen a victim, looked upon this order as her death-warrant She loved the young Archduchess Marie Antoinette tenderly; she took her upon her knees, embraced her with tears, and told her she was about to leave her, not for Naples, but never to see her again; that she was going down then to the tomb of her ancestors, and that she should shortly go again there to remain. Her anticipation was realised; confluent smallpox carried her off in a very few days, and her youngest sister ascended the throne of Naples in her place.

The Empress was too much taken up with high political interests to have it in her power to devote herself to maternal attentions. The celebrated Wansvietten, her physician, went daily to visit

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the young imperial family, and afterwards to Maria Theresa, and gave the most minute details respecting the health of the Archdukes and Archduchesses, whom she herself sometimes did not see for eight or ten days at a time. As soon as the arrival of a stranger of rank at Vienna was made known, the Empress brought her family about her, admitted them to her table, and by this concerted meeting induced a belief that she herself presided over the education of her children.

The chief governesses, being under no fear of inspection from Maria Theresa, aimed at making themselves beloved by their pupils by the common and blamable practice of indulgence, so fatal to the future progress and happiness of children. Marie Antoinette was the cause of her governess being dismissed, through a confession that all her copies, and all her letters, were invariably first traced out with pencil; the Comtesse de Brandès was appointed to succeed her, and fulfilled her duties with great exactness and talent. The Queen looked upon having been confided to her care so late as a misfortune, and always continued upon terms of friendship with that lady. The education of Marie Antoinette was certainly very much neglected.[1] The public prints, however, teemed with assertions of the

[1] With the exception of the Italian language, all that related to belles lettres, and particularly to history, even that of her own country, was almost entirely unknown to her. This was soon found out at the Court of France, and thence arose the generally received opinion that she was deficient in sense. It will be seen, however, in the course of these memoirs, whether that opinion was well or ill founded.—*Madame Campan.*

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superior talents of Maria Theresa's children. They often noticed the answers which the young Princesses gave in Latin to the harangues addressed to them; they uttered them, it is true, but without understanding them; they knew not a single word of that language.

Mention was one day made to the Queen of a drawing made by her, and presented by the Empress to M. Gérard, chief clerk of Foreign Affairs, on the occasion of his going to Vienna to draw up the articles for her marriage-contract. "I should blush," said she, "if that proof of the quackery of my education were shown to me. I do not believe that I ever put a pencil upon that drawing." However, what had been taught her she knew perfectly well. Her facility of learning was inconceivable, and if all her teachers had been as well informed and as faithful to their duty as the Abbé Metastasio, who taught her Italian, she would have attained as great a superiority in the other branches of her education. The Queen spoke that language with grace and ease, and translated the most difficult poets. She did not write French correctly, but she spoke it with the greatest fluency, and even affected to say that she had lost German. In fact she attempted in 1787 to learn her mother-tongue, and took lessons assiduously for six weeks; she was obliged to relinquish them, finding all the difficulties which a Frenchwoman, who should take up the study too late, would have to encounter. In the same manner she gave up English, which I had taught her for

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some time, and in which she had made rapid progress. Music was the accomplishment in which the Queen most delighted. She did not play well on any instrument, but she had become able to read at sight like a first-rate professor. She attained this degree of perfection in France, this branch of her education having been neglected at Vienna as much as the rest. A few days after her arrival at Versailles, she was introduced to her singing-master, La Garde, author of the opera of *Eglé*. She made a distant appointment with him, needing, as she said, rest after the fatigues of the journey and the numerous *fêtes* which had taken place at Versailles; but her motive was her desire to conceal how ignorant she was of the rudiments of music. She asked M. Campan whether his son, who was a good musician, could give her lessons secretly for three months. "The Dauphiness," added she, smiling, "must be careful of the reputation of the Archduchess." The lessons were given privately, and at the end of three months of constant application she sent for M. la Garde, and surprised him by her skill.

The desire to perfect Marie Antoinette in the study of the French language was probably the motive which determined Maria Theresa to provide for her as teachers two French actors; Aufresne, for pronunciation and declamation, and Sainville for taste in French singing; the latter had been an officer in France, and bore a bad character. The choice gave just umbrage to our Court. The Marquis de Durfort, at that time ambassador at

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Vienna, was ordered to make a representation to the Empress upon her selection. The two actors were dismissed, and the Princess required that an ecclesiastic should be sent to her. Several eminent ecclesiastics declined taking upon themselves so delicate an office; others who were pointed out by Maria Theresa (among the rest the Abbé Grisel) belonged to parties which sufficed to exclude them.

The Archbishop of Toulouse, since Archbishop of Sens,[1] one day went to the Duc de Choiseul at the moment when he was really embarrassed upon the subject of this nomination; he proposed to him the Abbé de Vermond, librarian of the Collége des Quatre Nations. The eulogistic manner in which he spoke of his *protégé* procured the appointment for the latter on that very day; and the gratitude of the Abbé de Vermond towards the prelate was very fatal to France, inasmuch as after seventeen years of persevering attempts to bring him into the ministry, he succeeded at last in getting him named Comptroller-General and President of the Council.

This Abbé de Vermond directed almost all the Queen's actions. He established his influence over her at an age when impressions are most durable; and it was easy to see that he had taken pains only to render himself beloved by his pupil, and had troubled himself very little with the care of instructing her. He might have even been accused of

[1] Étienne de Loménie, Comte de Brienne (1727-1794), afterwards Archbishop of Toulouse and Archbishop of Sens. For further particulars respecting him, see p. xiv.

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having, by a sharp-sighted though culpable policy, purposely left her in ignorance. Marie Antoinette spoke the French language with much grace, but wrote it less perfectly. The Abbé de Vermond revised all the letters which she sent to Vienna. The insupportable folly with which he boasted of it displayed the character of a man more flattered at being admitted into her intimate secrets than anxious to fulfil worthily the high office of her preceptor.[1]

His pride received its birth at Vienna, where Maria Theresa, as much to give him authority with the Archduchess as to make herself acquainted with his character, permitted him to mix every evening with the private circle of her family, into which the future Dauphiness had been admitted for some time. Joseph II., the elder Archduchesses, and a few noblemen honoured by the confidence of Maria Theresa, composed the party; and reflections on the world,

[1] The Abbé de Vermond encouraged the impatience of etiquette shown by Marie Antoinette while she was Dauphiness. When she became Queen he endeavoured openly to induce her to shake off the restraints she still respected. If he chanced to enter her apartment at the time she was preparing to go out, "For whom," he would say in a tone of raillery, "is this detachment of warriors which I found in the court? Is it some general going to inspect his army? Does all this military display become a young Queen adored by her subjects?" He would call to her mind the simplicity with which Maria Theresa lived; the visits she made without guards, or even attendants, to the Prince d'Esterhazy, to the Comte de Palfi, passing whole days far from the fatiguing ceremonies of the Court. The Abbé thus artfully flattered the inclinations of Marie Antoinette; and showed her how she might disguise, even from herself, her aversion from the ceremonies observed by the descendants of Louis XIV.—*Madame Campan.*

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on courts, and the duties of princes, were the usual topics of conversation. The Abbé de Vermond, in relating these particulars, confessed the means which he had made use of to gain admission into this private circle. The Empress, meeting him at the Archduchess's, asked him if he had formed any connections in Vienna? "None, Madame," replied he; "the apartment of the Archduchess and the hotel of the ambassador of France are the only places which the man honoured with the care of the Princess's education should frequent." A month afterwards Maria Theresa, through a habit common enough among sovereigns, asked him the same question, and received precisely the same answer. The next day he received an order to join the imperial family every evening.

It is extremely probable, from the constant and well-known intercourse between this man and Comte de Mercy, ambassador of the Empire during the whole reign of Louis XVI., that he was useful to the Court of Vienna,[1] and that he often caused the Queen to decide on measures, the consequences of which she did not consider. Born in a low class of citizens,[2] imbued with all the principles of the modern

[1] A person who had dined with the Abbé one day at the Comte de Mercy's said to that ambassador, "How can you bear that tiresome babbler?" "How can you ask it?" replied M. de Mercy; "you could answer the question yourself: it is because I want him."—*Madame Campan.*

[2] The Abbé de Vermond was the son of a village surgeon, and brother of an accoucheur, who had acted in that capacity for the Queen: when he was with her Majesty, in speaking to his brother, he never addressed him otherwise than as Monsieur l'Accoucheur.—*Madame Campan.*

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philosophy, and yet holding to the hierarchy of the Church more tenaciously than any other ecclesiastic; vain, talkative, and at the same time cunning and abrupt; very ugly and affecting singularity; treating the most exalted persons as his equals, sometimes even as his inferiors, the Abbé de Vermond received ministers and bishops when in his bath; but said at the same time that Cardinal Dubois was a fool; that a man such as he, having obtained power, ought to make cardinals, and refuse to be one hmself.

Intoxicated with the reception he had met with at the Court of Vienna, and having till then seen nothing of grandeur, the Abbé de Vermond admired no other customs than those of the imperial family; he ridiculed the etiquette of the House of Bourbon incessantly; the young Dauphiness was constantly incited by his sarcasms to get rid of it, and it was he who first induced her to suppress an infinity of practices of which he could discern neither the prudence nor the political aim. Such is the faithful portrait of that man whom the evil star of Marie Antoinette had reserved to guide her first steps upon a stage so conspicuous and so full of danger as that of the Court of Versailles.

It will be thought, perhaps, that I draw the character of the Abbé de Vermond too unfavourably; but how can I view with any complacency one who, after having arrogated to himself the office of confidant and sole counsellor of the Queen, guided her with so little prudence, and gave us the mortification of seeing that Princess blend, with

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qualities which charmed all that surrounded her, errors alike injurious to her glory and her happiness?

While M. de Choiseul, satisfied with the person whom M. de Brienne had presented, despatched him to Vienna with every eulogium calculated to inspire unbounded confidence, the Marquis de Durfort sent off a hairdresser and a few French fashions; and then it was thought sufficient pains had been taken to form the character of a Princess destined to share the throne of France.

It is universally known that the marriage of Monseigneur the Dauphin with the Archduchess was determined upon during the administration of the Duc de Choiseul. The Marquis de Durfort, who was to succeed the Baron de Breteuil in the embassy to Vienna, was appointed proxy for the marriage ceremony; but six months after the Dauphin's marriage the Duc de Choiseul was disgraced, and Madame de Marsan and Madame de Guéménée, who grew more powerful through the Duke's disgrace, conferred that embassy upon Prince Louis de Rohan, afterwards cardinal and grand almoner.

Hence it will be seen that the *Gazette de France* is a sufficient answer to those libellers, who dared to assert that the young Archduchess was acquainted with the Cardinal de Rohan before the period of her marriage. A worse selection in itself, or one more disagreeable to Maria Theresa, than that which sent to her in quality of ambassador a man so frivolous and so immoral as Prince Louis de Rohan could not have been made. He possessed but superficial know-

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ledge upon any subject, and was totally ignorant of diplomatic affairs. His reputation had gone before him to Vienna, and his mission opened under the most unfavourable auspices. In want of money, and the House of Rohan being unable to make him any considerable advances, he obtained from his Court a patent which authorised him to borrow the sum of 600,000 livres upon his benefices, ran in debt above a million, and thought to dazzle the city and Court of Vienna by the most indecent and ill-judged extravagance. He formed a suite of eight or ten gentlemen of names sufficiently high-sounding; twelve pages equally well born, a crowd of officers and servants, a company of chamber musicians, etc. But this idle pomp did not last; embarrassment and distress soon showed themselves; his people, no longer receiving pay, in order to make money abused the privileges of ambassadors, and smuggled[1] with so much effrontery, that Maria Theresa, to put a stop to it without offending the Court of France, was compelled to suppress the privileges in this respect of all the diplomatic bodies, a step which rendered the person and conduct of Prince Louis odious in every foreign Court. He seldom obtained private audiences from the Empress, who did not esteem him, and who expressed herself without reserve upon his conduct both as a bishop and as an am-

[1] I have often heard the Queen say that, at Vienna, in the office of the secretary of the Prince de Rohan, there were sold in one year more silk stockings than at Lyons and Paris together.—*Madame Campan.*

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bassador. He thought to obtain favour by assisting to effect the marriage of the Archduchess Elizabeth, the elder sister of Marie Antoinette, with Louis XV., an affair which was awkwardly undertaken, and of which Madame du Barry had no difficulty in causing the failure. I have deemed it my duty to omit no particular of the moral and political character of a man whose existence was subsequently so injurious to the reputation of Marie Antoinette.

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CHAPTER III.

Arrival of the Archduchess in France—Brilliant reception of the Dauphiness at Versailles—She charms Louis XV.—Madame du Barry's jealousy—Court intrigues—The Dauphin—His brothers and their wives.

A SUPERB pavilion had been prepared upon the frontiers near Kehl. It consisted of a vast saloon, connected with two apartments, one of which was assigned to the lords and ladies of the Court of Vienna, and the other to the suite of the Dauphiness, composed of the Comtesse de Noailles, her lady of honour; the Duchesse de Cossé, her *dame d'atours;* four ladies of the palace; the Comte de Saulx-Tavannes, *chevalier d'honneur;* the Comte de Tessé, first equerry; the Bishop of Chartres, first almoner; the officers of the Body Guard, and the equerries.

When the Dauphiness had been entirely undressed, in order that she might retain nothing belonging to a foreign court (an etiquette always observed on such an occasion), the doors were opened; the young Princess came forward, looking round for the Comtesse de Noailles; then, rushing into her arms, she implored her, with tears in her eyes, and with heartfelt sincerity, to direct her, to

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advise her, and to be in every respect her guide and support. It was impossible to refrain from admiring her airy walk; one smile alone was sufficient to win the heart.

While doing justice to the virtues of the Comtesse de Noailles, those sincerely attached to the Queen have always considered it as one of the earliest misfortunes of the latter—perhaps even the greatest that she could experience on her entrance into the world—not to have found, in the person naturally designed for her adviser, a woman indulgent, enlightened, and administering good counsel with that sweetness which disposes young persons to follow it. The Comtesse de Noailles had nothing agreeable in her appearance; her demeanour was stiff and her mien severe. She was perfect mistress of etiquette; but she wearied the young Princess with it, without making her sensible of its importance. So much ceremony was indeed oppressive; but it was adopted in order to present the young Princess to the French in such a manner as to command their respect, and guard her by an imposing barrier against the deadly shafts of calumny. It would have been proper to convince the Dauphiness that in France her dignity depended much upon customs by no means necessary at Vienna to secure the respect and love of the good and submissive Austrians for the imperial family. The Dauphiness was thus perpetually tormented by the remonstrances of the Comtesse de Noailles; and at the same time caused by the Abbé de Ver-

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mond to ridicule both the lessons upon etiquette and her who gave them. She preferred raillery to argument, and nicknamed the Comtesse de Noailles, *Madame l'Etiquette.*[1]

The fêtes which were given at Versailles on the marriage of the Dauphin were very splendid. The Dauphiness arrived there at the hour for her toilette, after having slept at La Muette, where Louis XV. had been to receive her; and where that Prince, blinded by a feeling unworthy of a sovereign and the father of a family, caused the young Princess, the royal family, and the ladies of the Court to sit down to supper with Madame du Barry.

The Dauphiness was hurt at this conduct; she spoke of it openly enough to those with whom she was intimate, but she knew how to conceal her dissatisfaction in public, and her behaviour showed no signs of it.[2]

[1] The Comtesse de Noailles, the Queen's lady of honour, possessed abundance of good qualities; piety, charity, and irreproachable morals rendered her worthy of reverence; but the Countess was also abundantly provided with all the obtrusiveness which a narrow mind could add even to the noblest qualifications. The Queen required a lady of honour who would explain to her the origin of forms, very inconvenient, it must be confessed, but invented as a fence against malevolence. The custom of having ladies and chevaliers of honour, and that of wearing hoops of three ells in circumference, were certainly invented to entrench young princesses so respectably, that the malicious gaiety of the French, their proneness to insinuations, and too often to calumny, should not by any possibility find an opportunity to attack them. —*Madame Campan.*

[2] See the *Mémoires de Weber*, tome i. The memoirs of this writer, foster-brother of Marie Antoinette, generally complete what Madame Campan has said of this Princess. The two works are almost inseparable.—*Note by the Editor.*

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She was received at Versailles in an apartment on the ground-floor, under that of the late Queen, which was not ready for her until six months after her marriage.

The Dauphiness, then fifteen years of age, beaming with freshness, appeared to all eyes more than beautiful. Her walk partook at once of the dignity of the Princesses of her house, and of the grace of the French; her eyes were mild, her smile amiable. When she went to chapel, as soon as she had taken the first few steps in the long gallery, she discerned, all the way to its extremity, those persons whom she ought to salute with the consideration due to their rank; those on whom she should bestow an inclination of the head; and lastly, those who were to be satisfied with a smile, calculated to console them for not being entitled to greater honours.

Louis XV. was enchanted with the young Dauphiness; all his conversation was about her graces, her vivacity, and the aptness of her repartees. She was yet more successful with the royal family when they beheld her shorn of the splendour of the diamonds with which she had been adorned during the first days of her marriage. When clothed in a light dress of gauze or taffety she was compared to the Venus di Medicis, and the Atalanta of the Marly gardens. Poets sang her charms; painters attempted to copy her features. One artist's fancy led him to place the portrait of Marie Antoinette in the heart of a full-blown rose. His ingenious idea was rewarded by Louis XV.

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The King continued to talk only of the Dauphiness; and Madame du Barry ill-naturedly endeavoured to damp his enthusiasm. Whenever Marie Antoinette was the topic, she pointed out the irregularity of her features, criticised the bon-mots quoted as hers, and rallied the King upon his prepossession in her favour. Madame du Barry was affronted at not receiving from the Dauphiness those attentions to which she thought herself entitled; she did not conceal her vexation from the King; she was afraid that the grace and cheerfulness of the young Princess would make the domestic circle of the royal family more agreeable to the old sovereign, and that he would escape her chains; at the same time, hatred to the Choiseul party contributed powerfully to excite the enmity of the favourite.

The fall of that minister took place in November 1770, six months after his long influence in the Council had brought about the alliance with the House of Austria, and the arrival of Marie Antoinette at the Court of France. The Princess, young, frank, volatile, and inexperienced, found herself without any other guide than the Abbé de Vermond, in a Court ruled by the enemy of the minister who had brought her there, and in the midst of people who hated Austria, and detested any alliance with the imperial house.

The Duc d'Aiguillon, the Duc de la Vauguyon, the Maréchal de Richelieu, the Rohans, and other considerable families, who had made use of Madame du Barry to overthrow the Duke, could not flatter

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themselves, notwithstanding their powerful intrigues, with a hope of being able to break off an alliance solemnly announced, and involving such high political interests. They therefore changed their mode of attack, and it will be seen how the conduct of the Dauphin served as a basis for their hopes.

The Dauphiness continually gave proofs of both sense and feeling. Sometimes she even suffered herself to be carried away by those transports of compassionate kindness which are not to be controlled by the customs which rank establishes.

In consequence of the fire in the Place Louis XV., which occurred at the time of the nuptial entertainments, the Dauphin and Dauphiness sent their whole income for the year to the relief of the unfortunate families who lost their relatives on that disastrous day.

This was one of those ostentatious acts of generosity which are dictated by the policy of princes, at least as much as by their compassion; but the grief of Marie Antoinette was profound, and lasted several days; nothing could console her for the loss of so many innocent victims; she spoke of it, weeping, to her ladies, one of whom, thinking, no doubt, to divert her mind, told her that a great number of thieves had been found among the bodies, and that their pockets were filled with watches and other valuables: "They have at least been well punished," added the person who related these particulars. "Oh no, no, madame!" replied the Dauphiness; "they died by the side of honest people."

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In passing through Rheims, on her way to Strasburg, she said, "That town is the one, in all France, which I hope not to see again for the longest possible time."[1]

The Dauphiness had brought from Vienna a considerable number of white diamonds; the King added to them the gift of the diamonds and pearls of the late Dauphiness, and also put into her hands a collar of pearls, of a single row, the smallest of which was as large as a filbert, and which had been brought into France by Anne of Austria, and appropriated by that Princess to the use of the Queens and Dauphinesses of France.[2]

The three Princesses, daughters of Louis XV., joined in making her magnificent presents. Madame Adelaide at the same time gave the young Princess a key to the private corridors of the château, by means of which, without any suite, and without being perceived, she could get to the apartments of her aunts, and see them in private. The Dauphiness, on receiving the key, told them, with infinite grace, that if they had meant to make her appreciate the superb presents they were kind enough to bestow upon her, they should not at the same time have offered her one of such inestimable value; since to

[1] The coronation of the French kings takes place in Rheims; so that when she should revisit that city, it would probably be in consequence of the death of Louis XV.—*Note by the Editor.*

[2] I mention this collar thus particularly because the Queen thought it her duty, notwithstanding this appropriation, to give it up to the commissaries of the national assembly when they came to strip the King and Queen of the crown diamonds.—*Madame Campan.*

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that key she should be indebted for an intimacy and advice unspeakably precious at her age. She did, indeed, make use of it very frequently; but Madame Victoire alone permitted her, so long as she continued Dauphiness, to visit her familiarly. Madame Adelaide could not overcome her prejudices against Austrian princesses, and was wearied with the somewhat petulant gaiety of the Dauphiness. Madame Victoire was concerned at this, feeling that their society and counsel would have been highly useful to a young person otherwise likely to meet with none but parasites. She endeavoured, therefore, to induce her to take pleasure in the society of the Marquise de Durfort, her lady of honour and favourite. Several agreeable entertainments took place at the house of this lady, but the Comtesse de Noailles and the Abbé de Vermond soon opposed these meetings.

A circumstance which happened in hunting, near the village of Acheres, in the forest of Fontainebleau, afforded the young Princess an opportunity of displaying her respect for old age, and her compassion for misfortune. A very old peasant was wounded by the stag; the Dauphiness jumped out of her calash, placed the peasant, with his wife and children in it, had the family taken back to their cottage, and bestowed upon them every attention and every necessary assistance. Her heart was always open to the feelings of compassion, and the recollection of her rank never restrained her sensibility. Several persons in her service entered her

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room one evening, expecting to find nobody there but the officer in waiting;[1] they perceived the young Princess seated by the side of this man, who was advanced in years; she had placed near him a bowl full of water, was stanching the blood which issued from a wound he had received in his hand with her handkerchief which she had torn up to bind it, and was fulfilling towards him all the duties of a pious sister of charity. The old man, affected even to tears, out of respect allowed his august mistress to act as she thought proper. He had hurt himself in endeavouring to bring forward some rather heavy piece of furniture which the Princess had asked him for.

In the month of July 1770 an unfortunate occurrence that took place in a family which the Dauphiness honoured with her favour contributed again to show not only her sensibility but also the benevolence of her disposition. One of her women had a son who was an officer in the *gens d'armes* of the guard; this young man thought himself affronted by a clerk in the war department, and imprudently sent him a challenge; he killed his adversary in the forest of Compiègne. The family of the young man who was killed, being in possession of the challenge, demanded justice. The King, distressed on account of several duels which had recently taken place, had unfortunately declared that he would show no mercy on the first event of

[1] The *valets de chambre* and the ushers were called *officiers de l'intérieure.—Madame Campan.*

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that kind which could be proved; the culprit was therefore arrested. His mother, in the deepest grief, hastened to throw herself at the feet of the Dauphiness, the Dauphin, and the young Princesses. After an hour's supplication they obtained from the King the favour so much desired. On the next day a lady of rank, while congratulating the Dauphiness, had the malice to add that the mother had neglected no means of success on the occasion, having solicited not only the royal family, but even Madame du Barry. The Dauphiness replied that the fact justified the favourable opinion she had formed of the worthy woman; that the heart of a mother should hesitate at nothing for the salvation of her son; and that in her place, if she had thought it would be serviceable, she would have thrown herself at the feet of Zamor.[1]

Some time after the marriage entertainments the Dauphiness made her entry into Paris, and was received with transports of joy. After dining in the King's apartment at the Tuileries, she was forced, by the reiterated shouts of the multitude, with which the garden was filled, to present herself upon the balcony fronting the principal walk. On seeing such a crowd of heads with their eyes fixed upon her, she exclaimed, "Grand Dieu! what a concourse!" "Madame," said the old Duc de Brissac, the Governor of Paris, "I may tell you,

[1] A little Indian who carried the Comtesse du Barry's train. Louis XV. often amused himself with the little marmoset; having jestingly made him Governor of Louveciennes, he received an annual income of 3000 francs.—*Madame Campan.*

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without fear of offending the Dauphin, that they are so many lovers."[1] The Dauphin took no umbrage at either acclamations or marks of homage of which the Dauphiness was the object. The most mortifying indifference, a coldness which frequently degenerated into rudeness, were the sole feelings which the young Prince then manifested towards her. Not all her charms could gain even upon his senses. This estrangement, which lasted a long time, was said to be the work of the Duc de la Vauguyon. The Dauphiness, in fact, had no sincere friends at Court except the Duc de Choiseul and his party. Will it be credited that the plans laid against Marie Antoinette went so far as divorce? I have been assured of it by persons holding high situations at Court, and many circumstances tend to confirm the opinion. On the journey to Fontainebleau, in the year of the marriage, the inspectors of public buildings were gained over to manage so that the apartment intended for the Dauphin, communicating with that of the Dauphiness, should not be finished, and a room at the extremity of the building was temporarily assigned to him. The Dauphiness, aware that this was the result of intrigue, had the courage to complain of it to Louis XV., who, after

[1] John Paul Timoleon de Cossé, Duc de Brissac and Marshal of France, the same who made the noble reply cited in the note at page 64 of this volume. At the Court of Louis XV. and XVI., he was a model of the virtue, gallantry, and courage of the ancient knights. The Comte de Charolais, finding him one day with his mistress, said to him abruptly, "Go out, sir." "Monseigneur," replied the Duc de Brissac, with emphasis, "your ancestors would have said, 'Come out.'"—*Note by the Editor.*

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severe reprimands, gave orders so positive that within the week the apartment was ready. Every method was tried to continue and augment the indifference which the Dauphin long manifested towards his youthful spouse. She was deeply hurt at it, but she never suffered herself to utter the slightest complaint on the subject. Inattention to, even contempt for, the charms which she heard extolled on all sides, nothing induced her to break silence; and some tears, which would involuntarily burst from her eyes, were the sole symptoms of her inward sufferings, discoverable by those in her service.

Once only, when tired out with the misplaced remonstrances of an old lady attached to her person, who wished to dissuade her from riding on horseback, under the impression that it would prevent her producing heirs to the crown, "Mademoiselle," said she, "in God's name, leave me in peace; be assured that I can put no heir in danger."

The Dauphiness found at the Court of Louis XV., besides the three Princesses, the King's daughters, the Princes also, brothers of the Dauphin, who were receiving their education, and Clotilde and Elizabeth, still in the care of Madame de Marsan, governess of the children of France. The elder of the two latter Princesses, in 1777, married the Prince of Piedmont, afterwards King of Sardinia. This Princess was in her infancy so extremely large that the people nicknamed her *gros Madame.*[1] The second

[1] Madame Clotilde of France, a sister of the King, was ex-

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Princess was the pious Elizabeth, the victim of her respect and tender attachment for the King, her brother, and whose exalted virtues have deserved a celestial crown.[1] She was still scarcely out of her leading-strings at the period of the Dauphin's mar-

traordinarily fat for her height and age. One of her playfellows, having been indiscreet enough even in her presence to make use of the nickname given to her, received a severe reprimand from the Comtesse de Marsan, who hinted to her that she would do well in not making her appearance again before the Princess. Madame Clotilde sent for her the next day: "My governess," said she, "has done her duty, and I will do mine; come and see us as usual, and think no more of a piece of inadvertence, which I myself have forgotten." This Princess, so heavy in body, possessed the most agreeable and playful wit. Her affability and grace rendered her dear to all who came near her. A certain poet, whose mind was solely occupied with the prodigious size of Madame Clotilde, when it was determined that she should marry the Prince of Piedmont, composed the following stanza. It must be remembered that two Princesses of Savoy had just married two French Princes :—

"Le bon Savoyard qui réclame
Le prix de ses double présent,
En échange reçoit Madame
C'est le bien grassement."

"Though we've only returned *one* princess for the *two*,
Who from Piedmont were sent us of late;
Yet surely no question of wrong can ensue,
Since the bargain's made up by her weight."

Note by the Editor.

[1] Elizabeth Philippine Marie Hélène of France, born at Versailles on the 3d of May 1764; guillotined 1794. "Madame Elizabeth," says M. de la Salle, the author of a biographical article upon this interesting and unfortunate Princess, "had not, like Madame Clotilde, her august sister, received from nature that softness and flexibility of character which renders the practice of virtue easy; in more points than one she resembled the Duke of Burgundy, the pupil of Fénélon. Education and piety operated upon her as they did upon that Prince: precepts, and the examples which surrounded her, adorned her with all virtues, and left nothing of her original inclinations, but amiable sensibility, lively impressions, and a firmness which seemed formed to meet the dreadful trials for which Heaven reserved her."—*Note by the Editor.*

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riage. The Dauphiness showed her marked preference. The governess, who sought to advance the Princess to whom Nature had been least favourable, was offended at the Dauphiness's partiality for Madame Elizabeth, and by her injudicious complaints weakened the friendship which yet subsisted between Madame Clotilde and Marie Antoinette. There even arose some degree of rivalry on the subject of education; and that which the Empress Maria Theresa bestowed on her daughters was talked of openly and unfavourably enough. The Abbé de Vermond thought himself affronted, took a part in the quarrel, and added his complaints and jokes to those of the Dauphiness on the criticisms of the governess; he even indulged himself in his turn in reflections on the tuition of Madame Clotilde. Everything becomes known at Court. Madame de Marsan was informed of all that had been said in the Dauphiness's circle, and was very angry with her on account of it.

From that moment a centre of intrigue or rather gossip against Marie Antoinette was established round Madame de Marsan's fireside; her most trifling actions were there construed ill; her gaiety, and the harmless amusements in which she sometimes indulged in her own apartments with the more youthful ladies of her train, and even with the women in her service, were stigmatised as criminal. Prince Louis de Rohan, sent ambassador to Vienna by this clique, was the echo there of these unmerited comments, and threw himself into

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a series of culpable accusations which he dignified with the name of zeal. He ceaselessly represented the young Dauphiness as alienating all hearts by levities unsuitable to the dignity of the French Court. The Princess frequently received from the Court of Vienna remonstrances, of the origin of which she could not long remain in ignorance. From this period must be dated that aversion which she never ceased to manifest for the Prince de Rohan.

About the same time the Dauphiness received information of a letter written by Prince Louis to the Duc d'Aiguillon, in which the ambassador expressed himself in very free language respecting the intentions of Maria Theresa with relation to the partition of Poland. This letter of Prince Louis had been read at the Comtesse du Barry's; the levity of the ambassador's correspondence wounded the feelings and the dignity of the Dauphiness at Versailles, while at Vienna the representations which he made to Maria Theresa against the young Princess terminated in rendering the motives of his incessant complaints suspected by the Empress.

Maria Theresa at length determined on sending her private secretary, Baron de Neni, to Versailles, with directions to observe the conduct of the Dauphiness with attention, and form a just estimate of the opinion of the Court and of Paris with regard to that Princess. The Baron de Neni, after having devoted sufficient time and intelligence to the subject, undeceived his sovereign as to the exaggerations of the French ambassador; and the

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Empress had no difficulty in detecting, among the calumnies which he had conveyed to her under the specious excuse of anxiety for her august daughter, proofs of the enmity of a party which had never approved of the alliance of the House of Bourbon with her own.[1]

[1] The Empress Maria Theresa knew very well which of the persons who composed the Court of Louis XV. were favourable and which unfavourable to Marie Antoinette. It is said that at the moment of that Princess's departure for France, the Empress gave her the following note in her own handwriting :—

"*List of persons of my acquaintance.*

The Duc and Duchesse de Choiseul.	Comte de Broglie.
	The brothers De Montazet.
The Duc and Duchesse de Praslin.	M. d'Aumont.
	M. Gérard.
Hautefort.	M. Blondel.
The Du Châtelets.	La Beauvan, a nun.
D'Estrée.	Her companion.
D'Aubeterre.	The Durforts.

"To this last family you will take every opportunity of showing gratitude and attention.

"The same to the Abbé de Vermond: I have the welfare of these persons at heart. My ambassador has orders to promote it. I shall be sorry to be the first to violate my own principle, which is to recommend nobody; but you and I owe too much to these persons not to seek all opportunities of being serviceable to them, if we can do it without too much *impegno*.

"Consult with De Mercy. I recommend to you in general all the Lorraines in whatever you can do for them."

The Abbé Georgel, the clever Jesuit secretary of the French Embassy in Austria, obtained, by means of a mysterious unknown person, the most important secrets of the Court of Vienna.

"A masked man," says he in his memoirs, "one day placed in my hands two papers of secret instructions sent to Comte de Mercy, for him to give personally to the Queen. The first for the King's inspection; the second for the Queen alone. This last contained advice as to the method to be adopted for compensating for the King's inexperience, and for profiting by the facility of his character to influence the Government without appearing to interfere in it. The political lesson was given to

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At this period the Dauphiness, though unable to obtain any influence over the heart of her husband, dreading Louis XV., and justly mistrusting everything connected with Madame du Barry and the Duc d'Aiguillon, had not deserved the slightest reproach as to that sort of levity which hatred and her misfortunes afterwards construed into crime. The Empress, convinced of the innocence of Marie Antoinette, directed the Baron de Neni to solicit the recall of the Prince de Rohan, and to inform the Minister for Foreign Affairs of all the motives which made her require it; but the House of Rohan interposed between its *protégé* and the Austrian envoy, and an evasive answer merely was given.

It was not until two months after the death of Louis XV. that the Court of Vienna obtained his recall. The avowed grounds for requiring it were, first, the public gallantries of Prince Louis with some ladies of the Court and others; secondly, his surliness and haughtiness towards other foreign ministers, which would have had more serious consequences, especially with the ministers of England and Denmark, if the Empress herself had not interfered; thirdly, his contempt for religion in a country where it was particularly necessary to show respect for it. He had been seen frequently to

Marie Antoinette with much art: she was led to feel that it was the surest way to render herself beloved by the French, whose happiness she might thereby secure; and at the same time cement the union of the two Houses of Austria and Bourbon."

What Georgel insinuates is obvious; but it must be remembered that he was one of Marie Antoinette's most implacable enemies. —*Note by the Editor.*

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dress himself in clothes of different colours, assuming the hunting uniforms of various noblemen whom he visited, with so much audacity that one day in particular, during the Fête Dieu, he and all his legation, in green uniforms laced with gold, broke through a procession which impeded them, in order to make their way to a hunting party at the Prince de Paar's; and fourthly, the immense debts contracted by him and his people, which were tardily and only in part discharged.[1]

The succeeding marriages of the Comte de Provence and the Comte d'Artois with two daughters

[1] "On the departure of Prince Louis de Rohan for Compiègne," says the Abbé Georgel, "where the new King held his Court, I remained at Vienna, charged with the transaction of the affairs of France with the Austrian ministry. I consequently received instructions to continue the negotiations, as entrusted with the political correspondence with our ministry, and the King's ambassador at Constantinople. Upon his arrival, the Prince de Rohan heard of the complaints of Maria Theresa, and the steps already taken in her name by Marie Antoinette for his recall. He had an audience of the King; it was short, and far from satisfactory. Louis XVI. listened to him a few minutes, and then abruptly said, 'I will soon let you know my pleasure.' He never could obtain an audience of the Queen, and, without deigning to receive him, she sent for the letter which her mother, the Empress Maria Theresa, had given him for her. His relations warned him that the prejudices of the King and Queen against him were very strong, and advised him not to make any attempts to return to Vienna, saying they would be quite thrown away, and would only give more publicity to his disgrace. Prince Louis remained in perplexity and suspense more than two months, and wrote a letter to the King, in which he described his situation in terms calculated to interest the monarch's feelings. His letter remained unanswered; but Louis XVI. told the Comtesse de Marsan, a cousin of the ambassador, that the embassy to Vienna was intended for the Baron de Breteuil, a man preferred by the Empress and selected by the Queen."

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of the King of Sardinia, procured society for the Dauphiness more suitable to her age, and altered her mode of life.

A pair of tolerably fine eyes drew forth in favour of the Comtesse de Provence, upon her arrival at Versailles, the only praises which could reasonably be bestowed upon her.

The Comtesse d'Artois, though not deformed, was very small; she had a fine complexion; her face, tolerably pleasing, was not remarkable for anything except the extreme length of the nose. But being good and generous, she was beloved by those about her, and even possessed some influence so long as she was the only Princess who had produced heirs to the crown.

From this time the closest intimacy subsisted between the three young families. They took their meals together, except on those days when they dined in public. This manner of living *en famille* continued until the Queen sometimes indulged herself in going to dine with the Duchesse de Polignac, when she was governess; but the evening meetings at supper were never interrupted; they took place at the house of the Comtesse de Provence. Madame Elizabeth made one of the party when she had finished her education, and sometimes Mesdames, the King's aunts, were invited. This custom, which had no precedent at Court, was the work of Marie Antoinette, and she maintained it with the utmost perseverance.

The Court of Versailles saw no change in point

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of etiquette during the reign of Louis XV. Play took place at the house of the Dauphiness, as being the first female of the State. It had, from the death of Queen Maria Leczinska to the marriage of the Dauphin, been held at the abode of Madame Adelaide. This removal, the result of an order of precedence not to be violated, was not the less displeasing to Madame Adelaide, who established a separate party for play in her apartments, and scarcely ever went to that which not only the Court in general, but also the royal family, were expected to attend. The full-dress visits to the King on his *débotter* were continued. High mass was attended daily. The airings of the Princesses were nothing more than rapid races in berlins, during which they were accompanied by Body Guards, equerries, and pages on horseback. They galloped for some leagues from Versailles. Calashes were used only in hunting.

The young Princesses were desirous to infuse animation into their circle of associates by something useful as well as pleasant. They adopted the plan of learning and performing all the best plays of the French theatre. The Dauphin was the only spectator. The three Princesses, the two brothers of the King, and Messieurs Campan, father and son. were the sole performers, but they endeavoured to keep this amusement as secret as an affair of State; they dreaded the censure of Mesdames, and they had no doubt that Louis XV. would forbid such pastimes if he knew of them. They selected a

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cabinet in the *entresol* which nobody had occasion to enter for their performance. A kind of proscenium, which could be taken down and shut up in a closet, formed the whole theatre. The Comte de Provence always knew his part with imperturbable accuracy; the Comte d'Artois knew his tolerably well, and recited elegantly; the Princesses acted badly. The Dauphiness acquitted herself in some characters with discrimination and feeling. The chief pleasure of this amusement consisted in all the costumes being elegant and accurate. The Dauphin entered into the spirit of these diversions, and laughed heartily at the comic characters as they came on the scene; from these amusements may be dated his discontinuance of the timid manner of his youth, and his taking pleasure in the society of the Dauphiness.

It was not till a long time afterwards that I learned these particulars, M. Campan having kept the secret; but an unforeseen event had well-nigh exposed the whole mystery. One day the Queen desired M. Campan to go down into her closet to fetch something that she had forgotten; he was dressed for the character of Crispin, and was rouged. A private staircase led direct to the *entresol* through the dressing-room. M. Campan fancied he heard some noise, and remained still, behind the door, which was shut. A servant belonging to the wardrobe, who was, in fact, on the staircase, had also heard some noise, and, either from fear or curiosity, he suddenly opened the door; the figure of Crispin

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frightened him so that he fell down backwards, shouting with all his might, "Help! help!" My father-in-law raised him up, made him recognise his voice, and laid upon him an injunction of silence as to what he had seen. He felt himself, however, bound to inform the Dauphiness of what had happened, and she was afraid that a similar occurrence might betray their amusements. They were therefore discontinued.

The Princess occupied her time in her own apartment in the study of music and the parts in plays which she had to learn; the latter exercise, at least, produced the beneficial effect of strengthening her memory and familiarising her with the French language.

The Abbé de Vermond visited her daily, but took care to avoid the imposing tone of a tutor; and would not, even as a reader, recommend the useful study of history. I believe he never read a single volume of history in his life to his august pupil; and, in truth, there never existed a Princess who manifested a more marked aversion for all serious studies.

While Louis XV. reigned, the enemies of Marie Antoinette made no attempt to change public opinion with regard to her. She always was the object of the love of the French people in general, and particularly of the inhabitants of Paris, who went at every opportunity to Versailles, the majority of them attracted solely by the pleasure of seeing her. The courtiers did not fully enter into the popular enthu-

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siasm which the Dauphiness had inspired; the disgrace of the Duc de Choiseul had removed her real support from her; and the party which had the ascendency at Court since the exile of that minister was, politically, as much opposed to her family as to herself. The Dauphiness was therefore surrounded by enemies at Versailles.

Nevertheless everybody appeared outwardly desirous to please her; for the age of Louis XV., and the character of the Dauphin, sufficiently warned courtiers of the important part reserved for the Princess during the following reign, in case the Dauphin should become attached to her.

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CHAPTER IV.

Death of Louis XV.—Picture of the Court—Madame du Barry dismissed—Departure of the Court to Choisy—M. de Maurepas Minister—Influence of example upon the courtiers—Enthusiasm raised by the new reign—Mourning at La Muette—The Queen—The King and the Princes, his brothers, are inoculated—Stay at Marly—Calumnies against the Queen—Bœhmer, the jeweller—Mademoiselle Bertin—Changes of fashion—Simplicity of the Court of Vienna—Extreme temperance, decorum, and modesty of Marie Antoinette.

About the beginning of May 1774 Louis XV., the strength of whose constitution had promised a long enough life, was attacked by confluent smallpox of the worst kind. Mesdames at this juncture inspired the Dauphiness with a feeling of respect and attachment, of which she gave them repeated proofs when she ascended the throne. In fact, nothing was more admirable nor more affecting than the courage with which they braved that most horrible disease: the air of the palace was infected; more than fifty persons took the smallpox, in consequence of having merely loitered in the galleries of Versailles; and ten died of it.

The end of the monarch was approaching. His reign, peaceful in general, had inherited strength from the power of his predecessor; on the other hand, his own weakness had been preparing mis-

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fortune for whoever should reign after him. The scene was about to change: hope, ambition, joy, grief, and all those feelings which variously affected the hearts of the courtiers, sought in vain to disguise themselves under a calm exterior. It was easy to detect the different motives which induced them every moment to repeat to every one the question: "How is the King?" At length, on the 10th of May 1774, the mortal career of Louis XV. terminated.[1]

[1] Christopher de Beaumont, Archbishop of Paris, the ardent apostle of frequent communion, arrived at Paris with the intention of soliciting, in public, the administration of the sacrament to the King; and secretly retarding it as much as possible. The ceremony could not take place without the *previous* and *public expulsion of the concubine*, according to the canons of the Church and the Jesuitical party, of which Christopher was the leader. This party, which had made use of Madame du Barry to suppress the Parliaments, to support the Duc d'Aiguillon, and ruin the Choiseul faction, could not willingly consent to disgrace her canonically. The Archbishop of Paris had always said openly that she had rendered signal services to religion. This Molinist party was joined by the Ducs de Richelieu, de Fronsac, d'Aiguillon, Bertin, Maupeou, and Terray. Madame du Barry being their support with the pusillanimous King, they were bound to defend her, and prevent degradation and such retaliation as the Duchesse de Chateauroux had meditated in a similar case in 1745. The opposite party sought, on the other hand, to accelerate a religious ceremony which was to annihilate a favourite who had driven their leader, the Duc de Choiseul, from Court. It was amusing to see the latter party, which was the scourge of religion in France, calling it in to their aid during the King's sickness, in order to revenge themselves on Madame du Barry; while the party of the Archbishop and the bigots, in their turn, combined to prevent Louis XV. from receiving the sacrament. *At that time they were coolly jobbing and bargaining about the King's conscience and penitence*, said the Cardinal de Luynes to me. There was consequently an absolute uproar at court. The question was, *whether the King should or should not receive the sacrament immediately.* "*Must we*," said the Maréchal de

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The Comtesse du Barry had, a few days previously, withdrawn to Ruelle, to the Duc d'Aiguillon's. Twelve or fifteen persons belonging to the Court thought it their duty to visit her

Richelieu, "*must we suffer Madame du Barry to be sent away with ignominy, and can we forget her services and expose ourselves to her vengeance in case of her return? or rather, shall we await the extremity of the invalid to effect a mere separation and proceed without noise or exposure to a plain administration of the sacrament?*" On the morning of the 1st of May the Archbishop of Paris presented himself to the sick monarch. He had scarcely reached the door of the King's antechamber when Maréchal de Richelieu went to meet him, and conjured him not to kill the King by a *theological proposition*,[1] which had killed so many sick persons. "But if you are curious to hear some elegant little sins," said he to the prelate, "place yourself there, monsieur, and I will confess such as you have not heard since you became Archbishop of Paris. If, however, you will absolutely confess the King, and repeat here the *rôle* of the Archbishop of Soissons, at Metz; if you will send away Madame du Barry with disgrace, you complete the triumph of the Duc de Choiseul, from whom Madame du Barry has contributed so much to deliver you, and you persecute your friend for the benefit of your foe. Yes, sir; so much is she your friend that she said to me yesterday: 'Let the Archbishop leave us alone; he shall have his cardinal's cap; I will answer for it.'" The Archbishop then went into the King's bed-chamber, and found there Madame Adelaide, the Duc d'Aumont, the Bishop of Senlis, and Richelieu, in whose presence he resolved not to say one word about confession for that day. This reticence so encouraged Louis XV. that, on the Archbishop withdrawing, he had Madame du Barry called in, and kissed her beautiful hands again with his wonted affection. On the 2d of May the King found himself a little better. Madame du Barry had brought him two confidential physicians, Lorry and Bordeu, who were enjoined to conceal the nature of his sickness from him in order to keep off the priests and save her from a humiliating dismissal. The King's improvement allowed of Madame du Barry diverting him by her usual playfulness and conversation. But La Martiniere, who was of the Choiseul party, and to whom they durst not refuse his right of entry, did

[1] The truth of these particulars is confirmed by Besenval's *Memoirs*, vol. i. —*Note by the Editor.*

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there; their liveries were observed, and these visits were for a long time grounds for disfavour. More than six years after the King's death one of

not conceal from the King either the nature or the danger of his sickness. The King then sent for Madame du Barry, and said to her: "My love, I have got the smallpox, and my illness is very dangerous on account of my age and other disorders. I ought not to forget that I am the *most Christian King and the eldest son of the Church.* I am sixty-four; the time is perhaps approaching when we must separate. I wish to prevent a scene like that of Metz." [When, in 1744, he had dismissed the Duchesse de Chateauroux.] "Apprise the Duc d'Aiguillon of what I say, that he may arrange with you if my sickness grows worse; so that we may part without any publicity." The Jansenists and the Duc de Choiseul's party publicly said that M. d'Aiguillon and the Archbishop had resolved to let the King die without receiving the sacrament, rather than disturb Madame du Barry. Annoyed by their remarks, Beaumont determined to go and reside at the Lazaristes, his house at Versailles, to avail himself of the King's last moments, and sacrifice Madame du Barry when the monarch's condition should become desperate. He arrived on the 3d of May, but did not see the King. Under existing circumstances, his object was to humble the enemies of his party and to support the favourite who had assisted to overcome them.

A contrary zeal animated the Bishop of Carcassonne, who urged "that the King ought to receive the sacrament; and by expelling the concubine to give an example of repentance to France and Christian Europe, which he had scandalised." "By what right," said Cardinal de la Roche Aymon, a complaisant courtier with whom the Bishop was at daggers drawn, "do you instruct me?"—"There is my authority," replied the Bishop, holding up his pectoral cross. "Learn, Monseigneur, to respect it, and do not suffer your King to die without the sacraments of the Church, of which he is the eldest son." The Duc d'Aiguillon and the Archbishop, who witnessed the discussion, put an end to it by asking for the King's orders relative to Madame du Barry. "She must be taken quietly to your seat at Ruelle," said the King; "I shall be grateful for the care Madame d'Aiguillon may take of her."

Madame du Barry saw the King again for a moment on the evening of the 4th, and promised to return to Court upon his recovery. She was scarcely gone when the King asked for her. "*She is gone,*" was the answer. From that moment the disorder

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these persons being spoken of in the circle of the royal family, I heard it remarked, "That was one of the fifteen Ruelle carriages."

gained ground; he thought himself a dead man, without the possibility of recovery. The 5th and 6th passed without a word of confession, viaticum, or extreme unction. The Duc de Fronsac threatened to throw the Curé of Versailles out of window if he dared to mention them. But on the 7th, at three in the morning, the King *imperatively* called for the Abbé Maudoux.[1] Confession lasted seventeen minutes. The Ducs de la Vrilliere and d'Aiguillon wished to delay the viaticum; but La Martiniere said to the King: "Sire, I have seen your Majesty in very trying circumstances; but never admired you as I have done to-day. No doubt your Majesty will immediately finish what you have so well begun." The King had his confessor Maudoux called back: this was a poor priest who had been placed about him for some years before because he was old and blind. He gave him absolution.

The formal renunciation desired by the Choiseul party, in order to humble and annihilate Madame du Barry with solemnity was no more mentioned. The grand almoner, in concert with the Archbishop, composed this formula, pronounced in presence of the viaticum: "Although the King owes an account of his conduct to none but God, he declares his repentance at having scandalised his subjects, and is desirous to live solely for the maintenance of religion and the happiness of his people."

On the 8th and 9th the disorder grew worse; and the King beheld the whole surface of his body coming off piecemeal and corrupted. Deserted by his friends and by that crowd of courtiers which had so long cringed before him, his only consolation was the piety of his daughters. . . . These notes relative to the last sickness of Louis XV. were furnished to me by M. de la Borde, his first *valet de chambre*, who left some valuable memoirs of the Court of Louis XV., by the Abbé Dupinet, Canon of Notre Dame, who had them from the Archbishop of Paris; by the Cardinal de Luynes, Madame d'Aiguillon, the Duc de Fronsac, and Maréchal de Richelieu. I have had recourse to both parties for the account of the intrigues by which the expiring King was tormented.—*Historical and Political Memoirs*, by Soulavie, vol. i.

[1] In Carlyle's *French Revolution* the confessor of Louis XV. is called Moudou.

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The whole Court went to the château; the *œil-de-bœuf* was filled with courtiers, and the palace with the inquisitive. The Dauphin had settled that he would depart with the royal family the moment the King should breathe his last sigh. But on such an occasion decency forbade that positive orders for departure should be passed from mouth to mouth. The heads of the stables, therefore, agreed with the people who were in the King's room, that the latter should place a lighted taper near a window, and that at the instant of the King's decease one of them should extinguish it.[1]

The taper was extinguished. On this signal the Body Guards, pages, and equerries mounted on horseback, and all was ready for setting off. The Dauphin was with the Dauphiness. They were expecting together the intelligence of the death of Louis XV. A dreadful noise, absolutely like thunder, was heard in the outer apartment; it was the crowd of courtiers who were deserting the dead sovereign's antechamber, to come and do homage to the new power of Louis XVI. This extraordinary tumult informed Marie Antoinette and her husband

1 One grudges to interfere with the beautiful theatrical "candle" which Madame Campan (i. 79) has lit on this occasion, and blown out at the moment of death. What candles may be lit or blown out in so large an establishment as that of Versailles, no man at such distance would like to affirm; at the same time, as it was two o'clock on a May afternoon, and these royal stables must have been five or six hundred yards from the royal sick-room, the candle does threaten to go out in spite of us. It remains burning indeed—in her fantasy: throwing light on much in those Mémoires of hers.—Carlyle's *French Revolution*, vol. i. p. 21.

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« Guidez nous, protégez nous, mon dieu ! nous régnons trop jeunes »

Paris. Richard Bentley and Son. 1883

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that they were called to the throne; and, by a spontaneous movement, which deeply affected those around them, they threw themselves on their knees; both, pouring forth a flood of tears, exclaimed: "*O God! guide us, protect us; we are too young to reign.*"

The Comtesse de Noailles entered, and was the first to salute Marie Antoinette as Queen of France. She requested their Majesties to condescend to quit the inner apartments for the grand *salon*, to receive the Princes and all the great officers, who were desirous to do homage to their new sovereigns. Marie Antoinette received these first visits leaning upon her husband, with her handkerchief held to her eyes; the carriages drove up, the guards and equerries were on horseback. The Château was deserted—every one hastened to fly from contagion, which there was no longer any inducement to brave.

On leaving the chamber of Louis XV., the Duc de Villequier, first gentleman of the bed-chamber for the year, ordered M. Andouillé, the King's chief surgeon, to open the body and embalm it. The chief surgeon would inevitably have died in consequence. "I am ready," replied Andouillé; "but while I operate you shall hold the head; your office imposes this duty upon you." The Duke went off without saying a word, and the corpse was neither opened nor embalmed. A few under-servants and workmen continued with the pestiferous remains, and paid the last duty to their master; the surgeons directed that spirits of wine should be poured into the coffin.

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The whole of the Court set off for Choisy at four o'clock; Mesdames the King's aunts in their private carriage, and the Princesses under tuition with the Comtesse de Marsan and the under governesses. The King, the Queen, Monsieur, the King's brother, Madame, and the Comte and Comtesse d'Artois, went in the same carriage. The solemn scene that had just passed before their eyes—the multiplied ideas offered to their imaginations by that which was just opening, had naturally inclined them to grief and reflection; but, by the Queen's own confession, this inclination, little suited to their age, wholly left them before they had gone half their journey; a word, drolly mangled by the Comtesse d'Artois, occasioned a general burst of laughter —and from that moment they dried their tears. The communication between Choisy and Paris was incessant; never was a Court seen in greater agitation. What influence will the royal aunts have?—And the Queen?—What fate is reserved for the Comtesse du Barry?—Whom will the young King choose for his ministers?—All these questions were answered in a few days. It was determined that the King's youth required a confidential person near him; and that there should be a prime minister. All eyes were turned upon De Machault and De Maurepas, both of them much advanced in years. The first had retired to his estate near Paris; and the second to Pont Chartrain, to which place he had long been exiled. The letter recalling M. de Machault was written when Madame Adelaide

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obtained the preference of that important appointment for M. de Maurepas. The page to whose care the first letter had been actually consigned was recalled.[1]

The Duc d'Aiguillon had been too openly known as the private friend of the King's mistress; he was dismissed. M. de Vergennes, at that time ambassador of France at Stockholm, was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs; Comte de Muy, the intimate friend of the Dauphin, the father of Louis XVI., obtained the War Department. The Abbé Terray in vain said, and wrote, that he had boldly done all possible injury to the creditors of the State during the reign of the late King; that order was restored in the finances; that nothing but what was beneficial to all parties remained to be done; and that the new Court was about to enjoy the advantages of the regenerating part of his plan of

[1] This fact has been doubted, but I am able to assert that Louis XVI. desired M. Campan to recall the page, whom he found ready to mount his horse, and whom he desired to come back again to return the letter to the King himself; and that the Queen said upon the subject to my father-in-law: "If the letter had gone, M. de Machault would have been Prime Minister, for the King would never have consented to write a second letter in contradiction of his first intention."[2]—*Madame Campan.*

[2] If we may credit a contemporary writer, the Abbé de Radonvilliers was not without influence in this last determination. Chamfort relates the following anecdote *à propos* of the nomination of the Comte de Maurepas:—

"It is a well-known fact that the King's letter, sent to M. de Maurepas, was written for M. de Machault. When M. de Maurepas arrived, the King would do no more than chat with him. At the end of the conversation, M. de Maurepas said to him: 'I will detail my ideas to-morrow at the Council.' It is related, too, that at this conversation he said to the King, 'Your Majesty, then, makes me Prime Minister?' 'No,' replied the King, 'I have no such intention.' 'I understand,' said M. de Maurepas; 'your Majesty wishes I should teach you to do without one.'"—*Note by the Editor.*

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finance; all these reasons, set forth in five or six memorials, which he sent in succession to the King and Queen, did not avail to keep him in office. His talents were admitted, but the odium which his operations had necessarily brought upon his character, combined with the immorality of his private life, forbade his further stay at Court; he was succeeded by M. de Clugny. De Maupeou, the Chancellor, was exiled; this caused universal joy. Lastly, the re-assembling of the Parliaments produced the strongest sensation; Paris was in a delirium of joy, and not more than one person in a hundred foresaw that the spirit of the ancient magistracy would be still the same; and that in a short time it would make new attempts upon the royal authority. Madame Du Barry had been exiled to Pont-aux-Dames. This was a measure rather of necessity than of severity; a short period of compulsory retreat was requisite in order completely to break off her connection with State affairs. The possession of Louveciennes and a considerable pension were continued to her.[1]

[1] The Comtesse du Barry never forgot the mild treatment she experienced from the Court of Louis XVI.; during the most violent convulsions of the Revolution she signified to the Queen that there was not in all France a female more grieved at the sufferings of her sovereign than herself; that the honour she had for years enjoyed, of living near the throne, and the unbounded kindness of the King and Queen, had so sincerely attached her to the cause of royalty, that she entreated the Queen to honour her by disposing of all she possessed. Though they did not accept her offer, their Majesties were affected at her gratitude. The Comtesse du Barry was, as is well known, one of the victims of the Revolution. She betrayed the lowest degree of weakness,

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Everybody expected the recall of M. de Choiseul; the regret occasioned by his absence among the numerous friends whom he had left at Court, the attachment of the young Princess who was indebted to him for her elevation to the throne of France, and all concurring circumstances, seemed to foretell his return; the Queen earnestly entreated it of the King, but she met with an insurmountable and unforeseen obstacle. The King, it is said, had imbibed the strongest prejudices against that minister,[1] from secret memoranda penned by his father, and which had been committed to the care of the Duc de La Vauguyon, with an injunction to place them in his hands as soon as he should be old enough to study the art of reigning. It was by these memoranda that the esteem which he had conceived for the Maréchal de Muy was inspired, and we may add that Madame Adelaide, who at this early period powerfully influenced the decisions of the young monarch, confirmed the impressions they had made.

The Queen conversed with M. Campan on the regret she felt at having been unable to procure the recall of M. de Choiseul, and disclosed the cause of it to him. The Abbé de Vermond, who, down to

and the most ardent desire to live. She was the only woman who wept upon the scaffold and implored for mercy. Her beauty and tears made an impression on the populace, and the execution was hurried to a conclusion.—*Madame Campan.*

[1] These prejudices did not arise from the pretended crime of which calumny had accused this minister, but principally from the suppression of the Jesuits, in which he had, in fact, taken an active part.—*Madame Campan.*

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the time of the death of Louis XV., had been on terms of the strictest friendship with M. Campan, called upon him on the second day after the arrival of the Court at Choisy, and, assuming a serious air, said, "Sir, the Queen was indiscreet enough yesterday to speak to you of a minister to whom she must of course be attached, and whom his friends ardently desire to have near her; you are aware that we must give up all expectation of seeing the Duke at Court; you know the reasons why; but you do not know that the young Queen, having mentioned the conversation in question to me, it was my duty, both as her preceptor and her friend, to remonstrate most sharply with her on her indiscretion in communicating to you those particulars of which you are in possession. I am now come to tell you that if you continue to avail yourself of the good nature of your mistress to initiate yourself in secrets of State, you will have me for your most inveterate enemy. The Queen should find here no other confidant than myself respecting things that ought to remain secret." M. Campan answered that he did not covet the important and dangerous character at the new Court which the Abbé wished to appropriate; and that he should confine himself to the duties of his office, being sufficiently satisfied with the continued kindness with which the Queen honoured him. Notwithstanding this, however, he informed the Queen, on the very same evening, of the injunction he had received. She owned that she had mentioned their conversation to the Abbé;

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that he had indeed seriously scolded her, in order to make her feel the necessity of being secret in concerns of State; and she added, "The Abbé cannot like you, my dear Campan; he did not expect that I should, on my arrival in France, find in my household a man who would suit me so exactly as you have done.[1] I know that he has taken umbrage at it; that is enough. I know, too, that you are incapable of attempting anything to injure him in my esteem; an attempt which would besides be vain, for I have been too long attached to him. As to yourself, be easy on the score of the Abbé's hostility, which shall not in any way hurt you. We run the risk of doing unjust actions, only when the persons about us possess the art of disguising those motives of jealousy or ambition by which they are prompted." The Abbé de Vermond having made himself master of the office of sole confidant to the Queen, was nevertheless agitated whenever he saw the young King; he could not be ignorant that the Abbé had been promoted by the Duc de Choiseul, and was believed to favour the

[1] The day after the arrival of the Dauphiness at Versailles, the Comtesse de Noailles asked her what orders she had to give M. Moreau, her librarian. She replied that the only order she had for him was to give up the key of her library to M. Campan, whom she installed in his office; adding that he might retain the title which the King had conferred upon him, but that she did not accept his services. She had been so prejudiced against M. Moreau by the Abbé de Vermond that she added that she would speak to the King about the matter; that she knew M. Moreau to be a good deal too clever, and that she desired to have no people about her but those on whom she could rely. —*Madame Campan.*

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Encyclopedists, against whom Louis XVI. entertained a secret prejudice, although he suffered them to gain so great an ascendency during his reign. The Abbé had, moreover, observed that the King had never, while Dauphin, addressed a single word to him; and that he very frequently only answered him with a shrug of the shoulders. He therefore determined on writing to Louis XVI., and intimating that he owed his situation at Court solely to the confidence with which the late King had honoured him; and that as habits contracted during the Queen's education placed him continually in the closest intimacy with her, he could not enjoy the honour of remaining near her Majesty without the King's consent. Louis XVI. sent back his letter, after writing upon it these words: "I approve the Abbé de Vermond continuing in his office about the Queen."

At the period of his grandfather's death Louis XVI. began to be exceedingly attached to the Queen. The first period of so deep a mourning not admitting of indulgence in the diversion of hunting, he proposed to her walks in the gardens of Choisy: they went out like husband and wife, the young King giving his arm to the Queen, and accompanied by a very small suite. The influence of this example had such an effect upon the courtiers that the next day several couples, who had long, and for good reasons, been disunited, were seen walking upon the terrace with the same apparent conjugal intimacy. Thus they spent whole hours, braving the intolerable

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wearisomeness of their protracted *tête-à-têtes*, out of mere obsequious imitation.

The devotion of Mesdames to the King their father throughout his dreadful malady had produced that effect upon their health which was generally apprehended. On the fourth day after their arrival at Choisy they were attacked by pains in the head and chest, which left no doubt as to the danger of their situation. It became necessary instantly to send away the young royal family; and the Château de la Muette, in the Bois de Boulogne, was selected for their reception. Their arrival at that residence, which was very near Paris, drew so great a concourse of people into its neighbourhood, that even at day-break the crowd had begun to assemble round the gates. Shouts of *Vive le Roi!* were scarcely interrupted for a moment between six o'clock in the morning and sunset. The unpopularity the late King had drawn upon himself during his latter years, and the hopes to which a new reign gives birth, occasioned these transports of joy.

A fashionable jeweller made a fortune by the sale of mourning snuff-boxes, whereon the portrait of the young Queen, in a black frame of shagreen, gave rise to the pun: "*Consolation in chagrin.*" All the fashions, and every article of dress, received names expressing the spirit of the moment. Symbols of abundance were everywhere represented, and the head-dresses of the ladies were surrounded by ears of wheat. Poets sang of the new monarch; all hearts, or rather all heads, in France were filled with

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enthusiasm. Never did the commencement of any reign excite more unanimous testimonials of love and attachment. It must be observed, however, that, amidst all this intoxication, the anti-Austrian party never lost sight of the young Queen, but kept on the watch, with the malicious desire to injure her through such errors as might arise from her youth and inexperience.

Their Majesties had to receive at La Muette the condolences of the ladies who had been presented at Court, who all felt themselves called on to pay homage to the new sovereigns. Old and young hastened to present themselves on the day of general reception; little black bonnets with great wings, shaking heads, low curtsies, keeping time with the motions of the head, made, it must be admitted, a few venerable dowagers appear somewhat ridiculous; but the Queen, who possessed a great deal of dignity, and a high respect for decorum, was not guilty of the grave fault of losing the state she was bound to preserve. An indiscreet piece of drollery of one of the ladies of the palace, however, procured her the imputation of doing so. The Marquise de Clermont-Tonnerre, whose office required that she should continue standing behind the Queen, fatigued by the length of the ceremony seated herself on the floor, concealed behind the fence formed by the hoops of the Queen and the ladies of the palace. Thus seated, and wishing to attract attention and to appear lively, she twitched the dresses of those ladies, and played a thousand other tricks. The contrast of these child-

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ish pranks with the solemnity which reigned over the rest of the Queen's chamber disconcerted her Majesty: she several times placed her fan before her face to hide an involuntary smile, and the severe old ladies pronounced that the young Queen had derided all those respectable persons who were pressing forward to pay their homage to her; that she liked none but the young; that she was deficient in decorum; and that not one of them would attend her Court again. The epithet *moqueuse* was applied to her; and there is no epithet less favourably received in the world.

The next day a very ill-natured song was circulated; the stamp of the party to which it was attributable might easily be seen upon it. I remember only the following chorus:—

"Little Queen, you must not be
So saucy, with your twenty years;
Your ill-used courtiers soon will see
You pass, once more, the barriers.
Fal lal lal, fal lal la."[1]

The errors of the great, or those which ill-nature chooses to impute to them, circulate in the world with the greatest rapidity, and become historical traditions, which every one delights to repeat. More than fifteen years after this occurrence I heard some old ladies in the most retired part of Auvergne relating all the particulars of the day of public condol-

[1] "Petite reine de vingt ans,
Vous qui traitez si mal le gens,
Vous repasserez la barrière,
Laire, laire, laire, lanlaire, laire lanla."

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ence for the late King, on which, as they said, the Queen had laughed in the faces of the sexagenarian duchesses and princesses, who had thought it their duty to appear on the occasion.

The King and the Princes, his brothers, determined to avail themselves of the advantages held out by inoculation, as a safeguard against the illness under which their grandfather had just fallen; but the utility of this new discovery not being then generally acknowledged in France, many persons were greatly alarmed at the step; those who blamed it openly threw all the responsibility of it upon the Queen, who alone, they said, could have ventured to give such rash advice, inoculation being at this time established in the Northern Courts. The operation upon the King and his brothers, performed by Dr. Jauberthou, was fortunately quite successful.

When the convalescence of the Princes was perfectly established, the excursions to Marly became cheerful enough. Parties on horseback and in calashes were formed continually. The Queen was desirous to afford herself one very innocent gratification; she had never seen the day break; and having now no other consent than that of the King to seek, she intimated her wish to him. He agreed that she should go, at three o'clock in the morning, to the eminences of the gardens of Marly; and, unfortunately, little disposed to partake in her amusements, he himself went to bed. Foreseeing some inconveniences possible in this nocturnal party, the

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Queen determined on having a number of people with her; and even ordered her women to accompany her. All precautions were ineffectual to prevent the effects of calumny, which thenceforward sought to diminish the general attachment that she had inspired. A few days afterwards, the most wicked libel that appeared during the earlier years of her reign was circulated in Paris. The blackest colours were employed to paint an enjoyment so harmless that there is scarcely a young woman living in the country who has not endeavoured to procure it for herself. The verses which appeared on this occasion were entitled "Sunrise."[1]

The Duc d'Orléans, then Duc de Chartres, was among those who accompanied the young Queen in her nocturnal ramble: he appeared very attentive to her at this epoch; but it was the only moment of his life in which there was any advance towards intimacy between the Queen and himself. The King disliked the character of the Duc de Chartres, and the Queen always excluded him from her private society. It is therefore without the slightest foundation that some writers have attributed to feelings of jealousy or wounded self-love the hatred which

[1] It was thus, with libels and ill-natured ballads, that the enemies of Marie Antoinette hailed the first days of her reign. They exerted themselves in every way to render her unpopular. Their aim was, beyond all doubt, to have her sent back to Germany; and there was not a moment to be lost in its accomplishment. That the indifference of the King towards his amiable and beautiful wife had lasted so long was already a kind of prodigy; any day the seductive charms of Marie Antoinette might undo all their machinations.—*Madame Campan.*

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he displayed towards the Queen during the latter years of their existence.

It was on this first journey to Marly that Bœhmer, the jeweller, appeared at Court; a man whose stupidity and avarice afterwards fatally affected the happiness and reputation of Marie Antoinette. This person had, at great expense, collected six pear-formed diamonds of a prodigious size; they were perfectly matched and of the finest water. The earrings which they composed had, before the death of Louis XV., been destined for the Comtesse du Barry.

Bœhmer, by the recommendation of several persons about the Court, came to offer these jewels to the Queen. He asked four hundred thousand francs for them. The young Princess could not withstand her wish to purchase them; and the King having just raised the Queen's income, which, under the former reign, had been but two hundred thousand livres, to one hundred thousand crowns a year, she wished to make the purchase out of her own purse, and not burthen the royal treasury with the payment. She proposed to Bœhmer to take off the two buttons which formed the tops of the clusters, as they could be replaced by two of her own diamonds. He consented, and then reduced the price of the earrings to three hundred and sixty thousand francs; the payment for which was to be made by instalments, and was discharged in the course of four or five years by the Queen's first *femme de chambre*, deputed to manage the funds

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of her privy purse. I have omitted no details as to the manner in which the Queen first became possessed of these jewels, deeming them very needful to place in its true light the too famous circumstance of the necklace, which happened near the end of the reign of Marie Antoinette.

It was likewise on this first journey to Marly that the Duchesse de Chartres, afterwards Duchesse d'Orléans, introduced into the Queen's household Mademoiselle Bertin, a milliner who became celebrated at that time for the total change she effected in the dress of the French ladies.

It may be said that the mere admission of a milliner into the house of the Queen was followed by evil consequences to her Majesty. The skill of the milliner, who was received into the household, in spite of the custom which kept persons of her description out of it, afforded her the opportunity of introducing some new fashion every day. Up to this time the Queen had shown very plain taste in dress; she now began to make it a principal occupation; and she was of course imitated by other women.

All wished instantly to have the same dress as the Queen, and to wear the feathers and flowers to which her beauty, then in its brilliancy, lent an indescribable charm. The expenditure of the younger ladies was necessarily much increased; mothers and husbands murmured at it; some few giddy women contracted debts; unpleasant domestic scenes occurred; in many families coldness or

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quarrels arose; and the general report was—that the Queen would be the ruin of all the French ladies.

Fashion continued its fluctuating progress; and head-dresses, with their superstructures of gauze, flowers, and feathers, became so lofty that the women could not find carriages high enough to admit them; and they were often seen either stooping, or holding their heads out of the windows. Others knelt down in order to manage these elevated objects of ridicule with less danger.[1] Innumerable caricatures, exhibited in all directions, and some of which artfully gave the features of the Queen, attacked the extravagance of fashion, but with very little effect. It changed only, as is always the case, through the influence of inconstancy and time.

The Queen's toilette was a masterpiece of etiquette; everything was done in a prescribed form. Both the *dame d'honneur* and the *dame d'atours*

[1] If the use of these extravagant feathers and head-dresses had continued, say the memoirs of that period very seriously, it would have effected a revolution in architecture. It would have been found necessary to raise the doors and ceilings of the boxes at the theatres, and particularly the bodies of carriages. It was not without mortification that the King observed the Queen's adoption of this style of dress: she was never so lovely in his eyes as when unadorned by art. One day Carlin, performing at Court as harlequin, stuck in his hat, instead of the rabbit's tail, its prescribed ornament, a peacock's feather of excessive length. This new appendage, which repeatedly got entangled among the scenery, gave him an opportunity for a great deal of buffoonery. There was some inclination to punish him: but it was presumed that he had not assumed the feather without authority.—*Note by the Editor.*

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usually attended and officiated, assisted by the first *femme de chambre*, and two ordinary women.[1] The *dame d'atours* put on the petticoat, and handed the gown to the Queen. The *dame d'honneur* poured out the water for her hands and put on her linen. When a Princess of the royal family happened to be present while the Queen was dressing, the *dame d'honneur* yielded to her the latter act of office, but still did not yield it directly to the Princesses of the blood; in such a case the *dame d'honneur* was accustomed to present the linen to the first *femme de chambre*, who, in her turn, handed it to the Princess of the blood. Each of these ladies observed these rules scrupulously as affecting her rights. One winter's day it happened that the Queen, who was entirely undressed, was just going to put on her shift; I held it ready unfolded for her; the *dame d'honneur* came in, slipped off her gloves, and took it. A scratching was heard at the door; it was opened, and in came the Duchesse d'Orléans: her gloves were taken off, and she came forward to take the garment; but as it would have been wrong in the *dame d'honneur* to hand it to her she gave it to me, and I handed it to the Princess. More scratch-

[1] The distinction between the honorary service and the ordinary service is easily drawn. "I have the right to do it," says honorary service haughtily. "You must do it," answers ordinary service sulkily. Between people who have the right to act and do not act, and people whose duty it is to act and who will not act, the great are likely to be very ill served. Madame Campan took pains to collect particulars relative to the ordinary service of the Queen of France. They will be found at the end of the work.—*Note by the Editor.*

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ing: it was Madame the Comtesse de Provence; the Duchesse d'Orléans handed her the linen. All this while the Queen kept her arms crossed upon her bosom, and appeared to feel cold; Madame observed her uncomfortable situation, and merely laying down her handkerchief without taking off her gloves, she put on the linen, and in doing so knocked the Queen's cap off. The Queen laughed to conceal her impatience, but not until she had muttered several times, "How disagreeable! how tiresome!"

All this etiquette, however inconvenient, was suitable to the royal dignity, which expects to find servants in all classes of persons, beginning even with the brothers and sisters of the monarch.

Speaking here of etiquette, I do not allude to majestic state, appointed for days of ceremony in all Courts. I mean those minute ceremonies that were pursued towards our Kings in their inmost privacies, in their hours of pleasure, in those of pain, and even during the most revolting of human infirmities.[1]

These servile rules were drawn up into a kind of code; they offered to a Richelieu, a La Rochefoucauld, and a Duras, in the exercise of their domestic functions, opportunities of intimacy useful to their interests; and their vanity was flattered by customs which converted the right to give a glass of water, to put on a dress, and to remove a basin, into honourable prerogatives.

Princes thus accustomed to be treated as divinities

[1] *Vide* Wraxall's *Memoirs.*

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naturally ended by believing that they were of a distinct nature, of a purer essence than the rest of mankind.

This sort of etiquette, which led our Princes to be treated in private as idols, made them in public martyrs to decorum. Marie Antoinette found in the Château of Versailles a multitude of established customs which appeared to her insupportable.

The ladies-in-waiting, who were all obliged to be sworn, and to wear full Court dresses, were alone entitled to remain in the room, and to attend in conjunction with the *dame d'honneur*, and the tire-woman. The Queen abolished all this formality. When her head was dressed, she curtsied to all the ladies who were in her chamber, and, followed only by her own women, went into her closet, where Mademoiselle Bertin, who could not be admitted into the chamber, used to await her.[1] It was in this inner closet that she produced her new and numerous dresses. The Queen was also desirous of being served by the most fashionable hairdresser in Paris. Now the custom which forbade all persons in inferior offices, employed by royalty, to exert their talents for the public, was no doubt intended to

[1] Mademoiselle Bertin, it is said, upon the strength of the Queen's kindness, became ridiculously proud. A lady one day went to her to ask for some patterns of mourning for the Empress. Several were shown to her, all of which she rejected. Mademoiselle Bertin exclaimed in a tone made up of vexation and self-sufficiency, "Show her, then, some specimens of my last negotiations with her Majesty." However ridiculous the expression may sound, it was actually used as related.—*Note by the Editor.*

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cut off all communication between the privacy of princes and society at large; the latter being always extremely curious respecting the most trifling particulars relative to the private life of the former. The Queen, fearing that the taste of the hairdresser would suffer if he should discontinue the general practice of his art, ordered him to attend as usual certain ladies of the Court and of Paris; and this multiplied the opportunities of learning details respecting the household, and very often of misrepresenting them.

One of the customs most disagreeable to the Queen was that of dining every day in public. Maria Leczinska had always submitted to this wearisome practice; Marie Antoinette followed it as long as she was Dauphiness. The Dauphin dined with her, and each branch of the family had its public dinner daily. The ushers suffered all decently-dressed people to enter: the sight was the delight of persons from the country. At the dinner-hour there were none to be met upon the stairs but honest folks, who, after having seen the Dauphiness take her soup, went to see the Princes eat their *bouilli*, and then ran themselves out of breath to behold Mesdames at their dessert.

Very ancient usage, too, required that the Queens of France should appear in public surrounded only by women; even at meal-times no persons of the other sex attended to serve at table; and although the King ate publicly with the Queen, yet he himself was served by women with everything which

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was presented to him directly at table. The *dame d'honneur*, kneeling, for her own accommodation, upon a low stool, with a napkin upon her arm, and four women in full dress, presented the plates to the King and Queen. The *dame d'honneur* handed them drink. This service had formerly been the right of the maids of honour. The Queen, upon her accession to the throne, abolished the usage altogether. She also freed herself from the necessity of being followed in the Palace of Versailles by two of her women in Court dresses, during those hours of the day when the ladies-in-waiting were not with her. From that time she was accompanied only by a single *valet de chambre* and two footmen. All the errors of Marie Antoinette were of the same description; a disposition gradually to substitute the simple customs of Vienna for those of Versailles was more injurious to her than she could possibly have imagined.

The Queen frequently spoke to the Abbé de Vermond of the perpetually recurring annoyances from which she had to release herself; and I always observed that, after having listened to what he had to say on the subject, she indulged with great pleasure in philosophical reveries on simplicity beneath the diadem, and paternal confidence in devoted subjects. This romance of royalty, which it is not given to all sovereigns to realise, flattered the tender heart and youthful fancy of Marie Antoinette to a singular extent.

This unfortunate Princess, against whom the

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opinions of the French people were at length so much excited, possessed qualities which deserved to obtain the greatest popularity. None could doubt this who, like myself, had heard her with delight describe the patriarchal manners of the House of Lorraine. She was accustomed to say that, by transplanting their manners into Austria, the Princes of that House had laid the foundation of the unassailable popularity enjoyed by the imperial family.[1] She frequently related to me the interesting manner in which the Dukes of Lorraine levied the taxes. "The sovereign Prince," said she, "went to church; after the sermon he rose, waved his hat in the air, to show that he was about to speak, and then mentioned the sum whereof he stood in need. Such was the zeal of the good Lorrainers that men have been known to take away linen or household

[1] Before the time of Francis Stephen, the Imperial Court of Germany was the most magnificent of all Europe. Nowhere was etiquette observed more rigorously. Francis suffered it to continue in State ceremonies, but banished it from the privacy of the Court. The Empress-Queen readily acceded to this alteration, and they substituted for ancient formalities the ease and simplicity in which they had indulged at Luneville. Except on days of ceremony their table was frugal, and they received at it persons of merit of both sexes, without distinction of birth. In their amusements they discarded all restraint, and their dress in no way distinguished them from their companions. Their mode of reception was even more gracious to the humble than the great, the poor than the rich. . . . Marie Antoinette deceived herself in thinking that she too could indulge in such familiarity with impunity. She did not know the disposition of our nation, which, as La Bruyére says, requires seriousness and dignity in its masters; and by the time she had learnt that truth the lesson came too late.—*History of Marie Antoinette de Lorraine, Queen of France*, by Montjoie.

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utensils without the knowledge of their wives, and sell them to add the value to their contribution. It sometimes happened, too, that the Prince received more money than he had asked for, in which case he restored the surplus."

All who were acquainted with the Queen's private qualities knew that she equally deserved attachment and esteem. Kind and patient to excess in her relations with her household, she indulgently considered all around her, and interested herself in their fortunes and in their pleasures. She had, among her women, young girls from the Maison de Saint Cyr, all well born; the Queen forbade them the play when the performances were not suitable; sometimes, when old plays were to be represented, if she found she could not with certainty trust to her memory, she would take the trouble to read them in the morning, to enable her to decide whether the girls should or should not go to see them; rightly considering herself bound to watch over their morals and conduct.

The Queen possessed in a high degree two valuable qualities—temperance and modesty. Her customary dinner was a chicken, roasted or boiled, and she drank water only. She showed no particular partiality for anything but her coffee in the morning, and a sort of bread to which she had been accustomed in her infancy at Vienna.

Her modesty in every particular of her private toilet was extreme. She bathed in a long flannel gown, buttoned up to the neck; and, while her two

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bathing women assisted her out of the bath, she required one of them to hold a sheet before her, raised so that her attendants might not see her. And yet Soulavie has dared, in the first volume of a most scandalous work, to say that the Queen was frightfully immodest, and that she had even given admittance to a venerable ecclesiastic while in her bath. What punishment can be too great for libellers who dare to give such perfidious falsehoods the title of historical memoirs!

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CHAPTER V.

Revision of the papers of Louis XV. by Louis XVI.—Man in the iron mask—The late King's interest in certain financial companies—Representation of *Iphigenia in Aulis*—The King gives Petit Trianon to the Queen—The Archduke Maximilian's journey to France—Questions of precedence—Misadventure of the Archduke—*Accouchement* of the Comtesse d'Artois—The *poissardes* cry out to the Queen to give heirs to the throne—Death of the Duc de la Vauguyon—Portrait of Louis XVI.—Of the Comte de Provence—Of the Comte d'Artois, etc.

DURING the first few months of his reign Louis XVI. dwelt at La Muette, Marly, and Compiègne. When settled at Versailles he occupied himself with a general revision of his grandfather's papers. He had promised the Queen to communicate to her all that he might discover relative to the history of the man with the iron mask, who, he thought, had become so inexhaustible a source of conjecture only in consequence of the interest which the pen of a celebrated writer had excited respecting the detention of a prisoner of State, who was merely a man of whimsical tastes and habits.

I was with the Queen when the King, having finished his researches, informed her that he had not found anything among the secret papers elucidating the existence of this prisoner; that he had con-

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versed on the matter with M. de Maurepas, whose age made him contemporary with the epoch during which the story must have been known to the ministers; and that M. de Maurepas had assured him he was merely a prisoner of a very dangerous character, in consequence of his disposition for intrigue. He was a subject of the Duke of Mantua, and was enticed to the frontier, arrested there, and kept prisoner, first at Pignerol, and afterwards in the Bastile. This transfer took place in consequence of the appointment of the governor of the former place to the government of the latter. It was for fear the prisoner should profit by the inexperience of a new governor that he was sent with the Governor of Pignerol to the Bastile.

Such was, in fact, the truth about the man on whom people have been pleased to fix an iron mask. And thus was it related in writing, and published by M. —— twenty years ago. He had searched the archives of the Foreign Office, and laid the real story before the public; but the public, prepossessed in favour of a marvellous version, would not acknowledge the authenticity of his account. Every man relied upon the authority of Voltaire; and it was believed that a natural or a twin brother of Louis XIV. lived many years in prison with a mask over his face. The story of this mask, perhaps, had its origin in the old custom, among both men and women in Italy, of wearing a velvet mask when they exposed themselves to the sun. It is possible that the Italian captive may have sometimes shown him-

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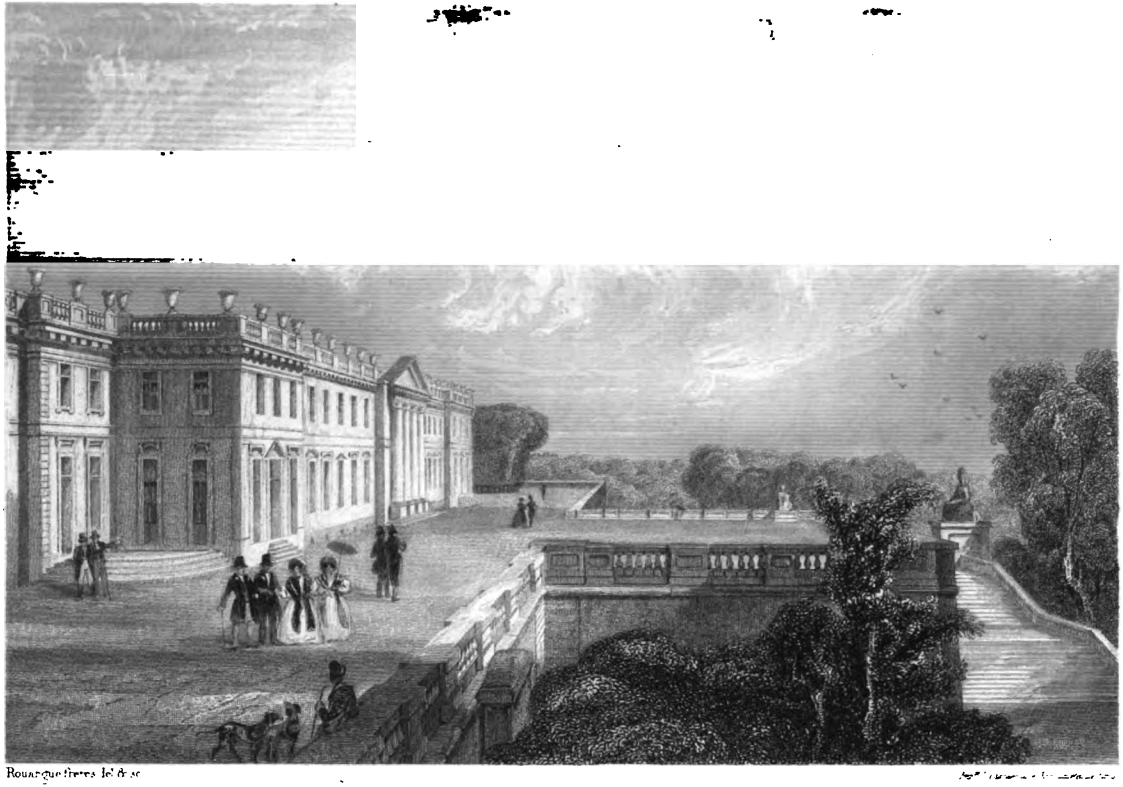

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LE CHÂTEAU DE COMPIÈGNE.

Paris Richard Bentley and Son. 1883

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self upon the terrace of his prison with his face thus covered. As to the silver plate which this celebrated prisoner is said to have thrown from his window, it is known that such a circumstance did happen, but it happened at Valzin, in the time of Cardinal Richelieu. This anecdote has been mixed up with the inventions respecting the Piedmontese prisoner.

It was also in this review of the papers of Louis XV. by his grandson that he found some very curious particulars relative to his private treasury. Certain shares in various financial companies afforded him a revenue, and had at last produced him a capital of some amount, which he applied to his secret expenses. The King collected his vouchers of title to these shares, and made a present of them to M. Thierry de Ville d'Avray, his chief *valet de chambre.*

The Queen was desirous to secure the comfort of Mesdames, the daughters of Louis XV., who were held in the highest respect. About this period she contributed to furnish them with a revenue sufficient to provide them an easy pleasant existence. The King gave them the Château of Bellevue; and added to the produce of it, which was given up to them, the expenses of their table and equipage, and payment of all the charges of their household, the number of which was even increased. During the lifetime of Louis XV., who was a very selfish Prince, his daughters, although they had attained forty years of age, had no other place of residence than their apartments in the Château of Versailles; no other walks than such as they could take in the large park

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of that palace; and no other means of gratifying their taste for the cultivation of plants but by having boxes and vases, filled with them, in their balconies or their closets. They had, therefore, reason to be much pleased with the conduct of Marie Antoinette, who had the greatest influence in the King's kindness towards his aunts.

Paris did not cease, during the first years of the reign, to give proofs of joy whenever the Queen appeared at any of the plays of the capital. At the representation of *Iphigenia in Aulis*, the actor who sang the words, "*Let us sing, let us celebrate our Queen!*" which were repeated by the chorus, directed by a respectful movement the eyes of the whole assembly upon her Majesty. Reiterated cries of *Bis!* and clapping of hands, were followed by such a burst of enthusiasm that many of the audience added their voices to those of the actors in order to celebrate, it might too truly be said, another Iphigenia. The Queen, deeply affected, covered her streaming eyes with her handkerchief; and this proof of sensibility raised the public enthusiasm to a still higher pitch.[1]

The King gave Marie Antoinette Petit Trianon.[2]

[1] The theatre was a constant topic of conversation at Court. When the Queen had not been present, she never omitted asking, "Was it well attended?" I have heard more than one courteous Duke reply with a bow, "There was not even a cat." This did not mean that the theatre was empty. It was even possible that it might be full; but only with honest citizens and country gentry. The nobility affected to know only their own class.—*Madame Campan.*

[2] The Château of Petit Trianon, which was built for Louis XV., was not remarkably handsome as a building. The luxuriance of the hothouses rendered the place agreeable to that Prince.

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Henceforward she amused herself with improving the gardens, without allowing any addition to the building, or any change in the furniture, which was very shabby; and remained, in 1789, in the same state as during the reign of Louis XV. Everything there, without exception, was preserved; and the Queen slept in a faded bed, which had been used by the Comtesse du Barry. The charge of extravagance, generally made against the Queen, is the most unaccountable of all the popular errors respecting her character. She had exactly the contrary failing; and I could prove that she often carried her economy to a degree of parsimony actually blamable, especially in a sovereign. She took a great liking for Trianon, and used to go there alone, followed by a valet; but she found attendants ready to receive her —a *concièrge*, and his wife who served her as *femme de chambre;* women of the wardrobe, footmen, etc.

When she first took possession of Petit Trianon, it was reported that she had changed the name of the seat which the King had given her, and called it *Little Vienna*, or *Little Schœnbrunn.* A person who belonged to the Court, and was silly enough to give this report credit, wishing to visit Petit Trianon with a party, wrote to M. Campan, requesting the Queen's permission to do so. In his note he called Trianon *Little Vienna.* Similar requests were usually laid

He spent a few days there several times in the year. It was when he was setting off from Versailles for Petit Trianon that he was struck in the side by the knife of Damiens; and it was there that he was attacked by the smallpox, of which he died on the 10th of May 1774.—*Madame Campan.*

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before the Queen just as they were made: she chose to give the permissions to see her gardens herself, liking to grant these little favours. When she came to the words I have quoted she was very much offended, and exclaimed, angrily, that there were too many fools ready to aid the malicious; that she had been told of the report circulated, which pretended that she thought of nothing but her own country, and that she kept an Austrian heart, while the interests of France alone ought to engage her. She refused the request so awkwardly made, and desired M. Campan to reply, that Trianon was not to be seen for some time; and that the Queen was astonished that any man in good society should believe she would do so ill-judged a thing as to change the French names of her palaces to foreign ones.

Before the Emperor Joseph II.'s first visit to France the Queen received a visit from the Archduke Maximilian in 1775. A stupid act of the ambassador, seconded on the part of the Queen by the Abbé de Vermond, gave rise at that period to a discussion which offended the Princes of the blood and the chief nobility of the kingdom. Travelling *incognito*, the young Prince claimed that the first visit was not due from him to the Princes of the blood; and the Queen supported his pretension.

From the time of the regency, and on account of the residence of the family of Orleans in the bosom of the capital, Paris had preserved a remarkable degree of attachment and respect for that branch of the royal house; and although the crown was be-

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coming more and more remote from the Princes of the House of Orleans, they had the advantage (a great one with the Parisians) of being the descendants of Henry IV. An affront to that popular family was a serious ground of dislike to the Queen. It was at this period that the circles of the city, and even of the Court, expressed themselves bitterly about her levity, and her partiality for the House of Austria. The Prince for whom the Queen had embarked in an important family quarrel—and a quarrel involving national prerogatives—was, besides, little calculated to inspire interest. Still young, uninformed, and deficient in natural talent, he was always making blunders.

He went to the Jardin du Roi; M. de Buffon, who received him there, offered him a copy of his works; the Prince declined accepting the book, saying to M. de Buffon in the most polite manner possible, "I should be very sorry to deprive you of it."[1] It may be supposed that the Parisians were much entertained with this answer.

The Queen was exceedingly mortified at the mistakes made by her brother; but what hurt her most was being accused of preserving an Austrian heart. Marie Antoinette had more than once to endure that imputation during the long course of her misfortunes. Habit did not stop the tears such

[1] Joseph II., on his visit to France, also went to see M. de Buffon, and said to that celebrated man, "I am come to fetch the copy of your works, which my brother forgot."—*Note by the Editor.*

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injustice caused; but the first time she was suspected of not loving France, she gave way to her indignation. All that she could say on the subject was useless; by seconding the pretensions of the Archduke she had put arms into her enemies' hands; they were labouring to deprive her of the love of the people; and endeavoured, by all possible means, to spread a belief that the Queen sighed for Germany, and preferred that country to France.

Marie Antoinette had none but herself to rely on for preserving the fickle smiles of the Court and the public. The King, too indifferent to serve her as a guide, as yet had conceived no love for her, notwithstanding the intimacy that grew between them at Choisy.

In his closet Louis XVI. was immersed in deep study. At the council he was busied with the welfare of his people; hunting and mechanical occupations engrossed his leisure moments, and he never thought on the subject of an heir.

The coronation took place at Rheims, with all the accustomed pomp. At this period the people's love for Louis XVI. burst forth in transports not to be mistaken for party demonstrations or idle curiosity. He replied to this enthusiasm by marks of confidence, worthy of a people happy in being governed by a good King; he took a pleasure in repeatedly walking without guards, in the midst of the crowd which pressed around him, and called down blessings on his head. I remarked the impression made at this time by an observation of

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Louis XVI. On the day of his coronation he put his hand up to his head, at the moment of the crown being placed upon it, and said, "It pinches me." Henry III. had exclaimed, "It pricks me." Those who were near the King were struck with the similarity between these two exclamations, though not of a class likely to be blinded by the superstitious fears of ignorance.

While the Queen, neglected as she was, could not even hope for the happiness of being a mother, she had the mortification of seeing the Comtesse d'Artois give birth to the Duc d'Angoulême.

Custom required that the royal family and the whole Court should be present at the *accouchement* of the Princesses; the Queen was therefore obliged to stay a whole day in her sister-in-law's chamber. The moment the Comtesse d'Artois was informed a Prince was born, she put her hand to her forehead and exclaimed with energy, "My God, how happy I am!" The Queen felt very differently at this involuntary and natural exclamation. Nevertheless, her behaviour was perfect. She bestowed all possible marks of tenderness upon the young mother, and would not leave her until she was again put into bed; she afterwards passed along the staircase, and through the hall of the guards, with a calm demeanour, in the midst of an immense crowd. The *poissardes*, who had assumed a right of speaking to sovereigns in their own vulgar language, followed her to the very doors of her apartments, calling out to her, with gross expressions, that *she* ought to

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produce heirs. The Queen reached her inner room, hurried and agitated; she shut herself up to weep with me alone, not from jealousy of her sister-in-law's happiness—of that she was incapable—but from sorrow at her own situation.

Deprived of the happiness of giving an heir to the crown, the Queen endeavoured to interest herself in the children of the people of her household. She had long been desirous to bring up one of them herself, and to make it the constant object of her care. A little village boy, four or five years old, full of health, with a pleasing countenance, remarkably large blue eyes, and fine light hair, got under the feet of the Queen's horses, when she was taking an airing in a calash, through the hamlet of Saint Michel, near Louveciennes. The coachman and postilions stopped the horses, and the child was rescued without the slightest injury. Its grandmother rushed out of the door of her cottage to take it; but the Queen, standing up in her calash and extending her arms, called out that the child was hers, and that destiny had given it to her, to console her, no doubt, until she should have the happiness of having one herself. "Is his mother alive?" asked the Queen. "No, Madame; my daughter died last winter, and left five small children upon my hands."—"I will take this one, and provide for all the rest; do you consent?"—"Ah, Madame, they are too fortunate," replied the cottager; "but Jacques is a bad boy. I hope he will stay with you!" The Queen, taking little Jacques upon her knee, said that

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she would make him used to her; and gave orders to proceed. It was necessary, however, to shorten the drive, so violently did Jacques scream, and kick the Queen and her ladies.

The arrival of her Majesty at her apartments at Versailles, holding the little rustic by the hand, astonished the whole household; he cried out with intolerable shrillness that he wanted his grandmother, his brother Louis, and his sister Marianne,—nothing could calm him. He was taken away by the wife of a servant, who was appointed to attend him as nurse. The other children were put to school. Little Jacques, whose family name was Armand, came back to the Queen two days afterwards; a white frock trimmed with lace, a rose-coloured sash with silver fringe, and a hat decorated with feathers, were now substituted for the woollen cap, the little red frock, and the wooden shoes. The child was really very beautiful. The Queen was enchanted with him; he was brought to her every morning at nine o'clock; he breakfasted and dined with her, and often even with the King. She liked to call him *my child*,[1] and lavished caresses upon him, still maintaining a deep silence respecting the regrets which constantly occupied her heart.

This child remained with the Queen until the time when Madame was old enough to come home

[1] This little unfortunate was nearly twenty in 1792; the fury of the people and the fear of being thought a favourite of the Queen's had made him the most sanguinary terrorist of Versailles. He was killed at the battle of Jemmappes.—*Madame Campan.*

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to her august mother, who had particularly taken upon herself the care of her education.

The Queen talked incessantly of the qualities which she admired in Louis XVI., and gladly attributed to herself the slightest favourable change in his manner; perhaps she displayed too unreservedly the joy she felt, and the share she appropriated in the improvement.

One day Louis XVI. saluted her ladies with more kindness than usual, and the Queen laughingly said to them, "Now confess, ladies, that for one so badly taught as a child, the King has saluted you with very good grace!"

The Queen hated M. de La Vauguyon; she accused him alone of those points in the habits, and even the sentiments, of the King which hurt her.

A former first woman of the bed-chamber to Queen Maria Leczinska had continued in office near the young Queen. She was one of those people who are fortunate enough to spend their lives in the service of kings without knowing anything of what is passing at court. She was a great devotee; the Abbé Grisel, an ex-Jesuit, was her director. Being rich from her savings, and an income of 50,000 livres, she kept a very good table; in her apartment, at the Grand Commun, the most distinguished persons who still adhered to the Order of Jesuits often assembled. The Duc de La Vauguyon was intimate with her; their chairs at the Église des Récollets were placed near each other; at high mass and at vespers they sang

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the *Gloria in Excelsis* and the *Magnificat* together; and the pious virgin, seeing in him only one of God's elect, little imagined him to be the declared enemy of a Princess whom she served and revered. On the day of his death she ran in tears to relate to the Queen the piety, humility, and repentance of the last moments of the Duc de La Vauguyon. He had called his people together, she said, to ask their pardon.—"For what?" replied the Queen sharply; "he has placed and pensioned off all his servants; it was of the King and his brothers that the holy man you bewail should have asked pardon; for having paid so little attention to the education of Princes on whom the fate and happiness of twenty-five millions of men depend. Luckily," added she, "the King and his brothers, still young, have incessantly laboured to repair the errors of their preceptor."[1]

[1] Grimm gives the following passage:—"The Duc de La Vauguyon having lately departed to render an account, at the tribunal of eternal justice, of the manner in which he has acquitted himself of the appalling and important duty of educating a Dauphin of France; and to receive the punishment due to the most criminal of undertakings, if it was not fulfilled to the satisfaction of the nation; a remarkable act of vanity, which excited equally the attention of the Court and the city, was witnessed on that occasion: this was the card of invitation to the funeral, sent round to every house according to custom. Every one has wished to preserve this card, on account of its singularity. I will transcribe it here from beginning to end, as it is already scarce, notwithstanding the profusion with which it was distributed:—

"'*You are requested to attend the funeral procession, service, and interment of Monseigneur Antoine-Paul-Jacques de Quélen, head of the names and arms of the ancient lords-castellans of Quélen, in Upper Brittany*, juveigneur *of the Counts of Porhoët, appointed to the name and arms of Sieur de Caulsade, Duc de La Vauguyon,*

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The progress of time, and the confidence with which the King and the Princes his brothers were inspired by the change in their situation since the death of Louis XV., had developed their characters. I will endeavour to depict them.

The features of Louis XVI. were noble enough, though somewhat melancholy in expression; his walk was heavy and unmajestic; his person greatly neglected; his hair, whatever might be the skill of his hairdresser, was soon in disorder. His voice, without being harsh, was not agreeable; if he grew animated in speaking he often got above his natural pitch, and became shrill. The Abbé de Radonvilliers, his preceptor, one of the forty of the French Academy, a learned and amiable man, had given him and Monsieur a taste for study. The King

peer of France, Prince of Carency, Comte de Quilen, and du Boulay, Marquis de Saint Megrin, de Callonges and d'Archiac, Vicomte de Calvignac, Baron of the ancient and honourable baronies of Tonneins, Gratteloup, Villeton, la Gruère and Picornet, lord of Larnagol and Talcoimur, vidame, *knight, and protector of Sarlac, high Baron of Guyenne, second Baron of Quercy, lieutenant-general of the King's armies, knight of his orders,* menin *of Monseigneur the late Dauphin, first gentleman of the bed-chamber of Monseigneur the Dauphin, grand master of his wardrobe, formerly governor of his person, and of that of Monseigneur the Comte de Provence, governor of the person of Monseigneur the Comte d'Artois, first gentleman of his chamber, grand master of his wardrobe, and superintendant of his household,—which will take place on Thursday the 6th of February* 1772, *at ten o'clock in the morning, at the royal and parochial church of Notre Dame de Versailles, where his body will be interred.* DE PROFUNDIS.'"

The terms *juveigneur* and *menin* are now obsolete: *juveigneur* signified a feudal dependant, the Duc d'Orléans being *juveigneur* of the House of France; *menin* was the title given to the six gentlemen-in-waiting on the Dauphin, and was first used when the household of the son of Louis XIV. was formed.

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had continued to instruct himself; he knew the English language perfectly; I have often heard him translate some of the most difficult passages in Milton's poems. He was a skilful geographer, and was fond of drawing and colouring maps; he was well versed in history, but had not perhaps sufficiently studied the spirit of it. He appreciated dramatic beauties, and judged them accurately. At Choisy, one day, several ladies expressed their dissatisfaction because the French actors were going to perform one of Molière's pieces; the King inquired why they disapproved of the choice. One of them answered that everybody must admit that Molière had *very bad taste;* the King replied that many things might be found in Molière contrary to fashion, but that it appeared to him difficult to point out any in bad taste.[1] This Prince combined with his attainments the attributes of a

[1] The King, having purchased the Château of Rambouillet from the Duc de Penthièvre, amused himself with embellishing it. I have seen a register entirely in his own handwriting, which proves that he possessed a great variety of information on the minutiæ of various branches of knowledge. In his accounts he would not omit an outlay of twelve pence. His figures and letters, when he wished to write legibly, were small and very neat, but in general he wrote very ill. He was so sparing of paper that he divided a sheet into eight, six, or four pieces, according to the length of what he had to write. Towards the close of the page he compressed the letters, and avoided interlineations. The last words were close to the edge of the paper; he seemed to regret being obliged to begin another page. He was methodical and analytical; he divided what he wrote into chapters and sections. He had extracted from the works of Nicole and Fénélon, his favourite authors, three or four hundred concise and sententious phrases, these he had classed according to subject, and formed a work of them in the style of Montesquieu. To

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good husband, a tender father, and an indulgent master.

Unfortunately he showed too much predilection for the mechanical arts; masonry and lock-making so delighted him that he admitted into his private apartment a common locksmith with whom he made keys and locks; and his hands, blackened by that sort of work, were often, in my presence, the subject of remonstrances and even sharp reproaches from the Queen, who would have chosen other amusements for her husband.[1]

this treatise he had given the following general title: *Of Moderate Monarchy* (De la Monarchie temperée), with chapters entitled, "Of the Person of the Prince;" "Of the Authority of Bodies in the State;" "Of the Character of the Executive Functions of the Monarchy." Had he been able to carry into effect all the grand precepts he had observed in Fénélon, Louis XVI. would have been an accomplished monarch, France a powerful kingdom. The King used to accept the speeches his ministers presented to him to deliver on important occasions; but he corrected and modified them; struck out some parts, and added others; and sometimes consulted the Queen on the subject. The phrase of the minister erased by the King was frequently unsuitable, and dictated by the minister's private feelings; but the King's was always the natural expression. He himself composed, three times or oftener, his famous answers to the parliament which he banished. But in his letters he was negligent, and always incorrect. Simplicity was the characteristic of the King's style; the figurative style of M. Necker did not please him; the sarcasms of Maurepas were disagreeable to him. Unfortunate Prince! he would predict, in his observations, that if such a calamity should happen, the monarchy would be ruined; and the next day he would consent in council to the very measure which he had condemned the day before, and which brought him nearer the brink of the precipice. —*Historical and Political Memoirs of the Reign of Louis XVI.*, by Soulavie, vol. ii.

[1] Louis XVI. saw that the art of lock-making was capable of application to a higher study. He was an excellent geographer. The most valuable and complete instrument for the study of that

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Austere and rigid with regard to himself alone, the King observed the laws of the Church with scrupulous exactness. He fasted and abstained throughout the whole of Lent. He thought it right that the Queen should not observe these customs with the same strictness. Though sincerely pious, the spirit of the age had disposed his mind to toleration. Modest and simple in his habits, Turgot, Malesherbes, and Necker judged that a Prince of such a character would willingly sacrifice the royal prerogative to the solid greatness of his people. His heart, in truth, disposed him towards reforms; but his prejudices and fears, and the clamours of pious and privileged persons, intimidated him, and made him abandon plans which his love for the people had suggested.

Monsieur[1] had more dignity of demeanour than the King; but his corpulence rendered his gait inelegant. He was fond of pageantry and magnificence. He cultivated the *belles-lettres*, and under assumed names often contributed verses to the *Mercury* and other papers.[2]

His wonderful memory was the handmaid of his

science was begun by his orders and under his direction. It was an immense globe of copper, which was long preserved, though unfinished, in the Mazarine library. Louis XVI. invented and had executed under his own eyes the ingenious mechanism required for this globe.—*Note by the Editor.*

[1] Afterwards Louis XVIII.

[2] During his stay at Avignon, Monsieur lodged with the Duc de Crillon; he refused the town-guard which was offered him, saying, "A son of France, under the roof of a Crillon, needs no guard."—*Note by the Editor.*

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wit, furnishing him with the happiest quotations. He knew by heart from the finest passages of the Latin classics to the Latin of all the prayers; from the works of Racine to the vaudeville of *Rose et Colas.*

The Comte d'Artois[1] had an agreeable countenance, was well made, skilful in bodily exercises, lively, impetuous, fond of pleasure, and very particular in his dress. Some happy observations made by him were repeated with approval; several of them gave a favourable idea of his heart.[2] The Parisians liked the open and frank character of this Prince, which they considered national, and showed real affection for him.

The dominion that the Queen gained over the King's mind, the charms of a society in which Monsieur displayed his wit, and to which the Comte d'Artois gave life by the vivacity of youth, gradually softened that ruggedness of manner in Louis XVI., which a better-conducted education might have prevented. Still this defect often showed itself, and, in spite of his extreme simplicity, the King inspired those who had occasion to speak to him with diffidence. Courtiers, submissive in the presence of their sovereign, are only the more ready to caricature him; with little good breeding, they called

[1] Afterwards Charles X.

[2] A selfish courtier was foolish enough to remark that the Abbé de Besplas had complained improperly of the manner in which prisoners were treated in gaols, since it might be considered a part of the punishment which their crimes deserved. The Prince interrupted him, indignantly exclaiming, "How can one tell that they are guilty? That is never known till the sentence is passed."—*Note by the Editor.*

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those answers they so much dreaded, *les coups de boutoir du Roi.*[1]

Methodical in all his habits, the King always went to bed at eleven precisely. One evening the Queen was going with her usual circle to a party, either at the Duc de Duras' or the Princesse de Guéménée's. The hand of the clock was slily put forward to hasten the King's departure by a few minutes; he thought bed-time was come, retired, and found none of his attendants ready to wait on him. This joke became known in all the drawing-rooms of Versailles, and was disapproved of there. Kings have no privacy. Queens have no boudoirs. If those who are in immediate attendance upon sovereigns be not themselves disposed to transmit their private habits to posterity, the meanest valet will relate what he has seen or heard; his gossip circulates rapidly, and forms public opinion, which at length ascribes to the most august persons characters which, however often they may be false, are almost always indelible.

[1] The literal meaning of the phrase "*coup de boutoir*," is a poke from the snout of a boar.

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Annex to Chapter V.

The following extracts from works relating to this period illustrate the importance then attached to etiquette and ceremonial, and show the character and habits of Louis XVI. :—

"Mademoiselle de Lorraine's Minuet."

"A few days before the Dauphin's marriage it was reported that Mademoiselle de Lorraine, daughter of the Comtesse de Brionne, and sister of the Prince de Lambesc, grand écuyer of France, was to dance her minuet at the dress ball immediately after the Princes and Princesses of the blood; and that the King had granted her that distinction just after an audience which his Majesty had given to the Comte de Mercy, the ambassador of the Emperor and Empress. The intelligence about Mademoiselle de Lorraine's minuet caused the greatest excitement among the dukes and peers, who enlisted all the superior nobility of the kingdom in their cause. They set it down as an incontrovertible principle that there could not be any intermediate rank between the Princes of the blood and the superior nobility; and that, consequently, Mademoiselle de Lorraine could have no rank distinct from that of women of quality presented at Court. The Archbishop of Rheims, the first ecclesiastical peer, being unwell, they met at the house of the Bishop of Noyon, the second ecclesiastical peer, brother of the Maréchal de Broglie. They drew up a memorial to be presented to the King; the dukes and peers left intervals between their signatures that the superior nobility might sign without distinction of title or rank. The Bishop of Noyon presented this memorial to his Majesty.

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"The request was hardly known when the following parody on it was publicly circulated:—

"'Sire, the Great, one and all
See, with sorrow and pain,
A Princess of Lorraine
Take the lead at the ball.
If your Majesty mean
Such affronts to project,
Such marked disrespect,
They will quit the gay scene;
And leave fiddlers and all:
Then think what is said,
The agreement is made,
Signed Bishop of Noyon,
De Villette, Beaufremont, etc.'

"In fact, it was openly said that if the King's answer were unfavourable, all the women of quality would find themselves suddenly indisposed, and not one of them would dance at the ball. The parody is not without point in other respects. Independently of the absurdity of a prelate's presiding over deliberations on the subject of a minuet, the names of some ancient and illustrious houses are enclosed in it, between two grandees of the monarchy of very recent date. This may be taken for a joke, but it is a positive truth that the Marquis de Villette, the son of a treasurer of war extraordinary, who never distinguished himself further than by a few trifling compositions, was permitted to sign a petition, at the bottom of which we read the names of Beaufremont, Clermont, and Montmorency. No doubt his descendants will be grateful to him for this signature. They will say, 'One of our ancestors signed the famous minuet petition on the marriage of the grandson of Louis XV. in concert with all the peers, and all the superior nobility of the kingdom; so that our name was thenceforward classed among the most illustrious in the kingdom.' They may also say, 'In 1770, at the dress ball on the marriage of the Dauphin, a Villette disputed precedence with the Princes of the House of Lorraine.' 'It is the great Villette,' one of his grandsons will add, 'who published, at his own expense, an eulogium upon *Charles V.* and one upon Henry IV. which have not escaped the attacks of time either in the archives of literature or in those of our house.'

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There are plenty of historical proofs which rest on no better foundation."—Grimm's *Correspondence*, tome vii. page 143.

The following particulars are added by Soulavie:—"Maria Theresa knew the Court of Versailles well; and yet she so far erred as to demand diplomatically, through M. de Mercy, her ambassador, that Mademoiselle de Lorraine, her relation, and the Prince de Lambesc, should rank next after the Princes of the blood in the entertainments on the marriage of her daughter with the Dauphin. Louis XV., in order to gratify the Dauphiness, who desired it, and Maria Theresa, who demanded it, thought fit to make it an affair of state. He knew the jealousy of the grandees of his Court with regard to their rights of etiquette, and he desired them, by virtue of the submission and attachment which they owed him, and which they had manifested to him, as well as to his predecessors, not to contradict him on this occasion, intimating his desire to mark his gratitude to the Empress for the present she made to France of her daughter. The King did not calculate on the obstacles the dukes would throw in the way of this new assumption. The ladies of the Court, from whom Louis XV. had a right to expect most deference, played an obstinate and haughty part, opposing an insurmountable resistance to the King's request. They were firm in their resolution of depriving themselves of the pleasure of the ball rather than suffer their right to dance first to be infringed upon. Among all these ladies, Madame de Bouillon distinguished herself most by the asperity of her observations. Louis XV. showed himself so much offended at them that she came no more to Court. The Dauphiness, on her part, was so vexed that she procured one of the letters that Louis XV. had written to the peers, and shut it up in her desk, saying, '*I will remember it.*' However, in order to put an end to the matter, Mademoiselle de Lorraine agreed to dance with the Duchesse de Duras, whose situation kept her at Court."—*Historical and Political Memoirs of the Reign of Louis XVI.*, vol. i.

Coronation of Louis XVI.

"The dresses worn by the principal dignitaries at the consecration were interesting, on account both of their richness and

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their ancient form. The lay peers were clad in long vests of gold brocade; they had girdles of gold, silver, and violet-coloured silk mixed, and over the long vest a ducal mantle of violet cloth, lined and edged with ermine; the round collar was likewise of ermine; and every one wore a crown upon a cap of violet satin, and the collar of the order of the Holy Ghost over the mantle. The captain of the hundred Swiss of the King's Guard was dressed in silver stuff, with an embroidered shoulder-belt of the same; a black mantle lined with cloth of silver, and, as well as his trunk hose, trimmed with lace, and a black cap surmounted with a plume of feathers. The grand master and the master of the ceremonies were dressed in silver stuff doublets, black velvet breeches intersected by bands, and cloaks of black velvet, trimmed with silver lace, with caps of black velvet surmounted with white feathers.

"On Sunday the 11th of June, at six in the morning, the canons in their copes arrived in the choir. They were soon followed by the Archbishop Duc de Rheims, the cardinals and prelates invited, the ministers, the marshals of France, the counsellors of state, and the deputies of the various companies. About half-past six the lay peers arrived. Monsieur represented the Duke of Burgundy; M. le Comte d'Artois, the Duke of Normandy; and the Duc d'Orléans the Duke of Aquitaine. The remainder of the ancient peers of France, the Counts of Toulouse, Flanders, and Champagne, were represented by the Duc de Chartres, the Prince de Condé, and the Duc de Bourbon, who wore counts' coronets. The ecclesiastical peers continued hooded and mitred during the whole ceremony.

"At seven, the Bishop Duc de Laon, and the Bishop Comte de Beauvais, set out to fetch the King. These two prelates, in their pontifical dresses, with reliquaries suspended from their necks, were preceded by all the canons of the church of Rheims, with whom were the musicians. The chanter and sub-chanter walked after the clergy and before the Marquis de Dreux, grand master of the ceremonies, who immediately preceded the bishops; they passed through a covered gallery, and came to the King's door, which, according to custom from time immemorial, they found shut. The chanter strikes upon it with his bâton; and the great chamberlain, without opening, says to

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him, '*What is it you require?*'—'*We ask for the King,*' replies the principal ecclesiastical peer.—'*The King sleeps,*' returns the great chamberlain. Then the grand chanter strikes again, with the same result. At length the chanter, having struck a third time, and the great chamberlain answered '*The King sleeps,*' the ecclesiastical peer pronounces these words, '*We demand Louis XVI., whom God has given us for King;*' and immediately the chamber doors open. The grand master of the ceremonies leads the bishops to his Majesty, who is stretched upon a state bed: they salute him profoundly. The monarch is clothed in a long crimson gown, trimmed with gold galoon, and, as well as the shirt, open at those places where he is to be anointed. Above the gown he has a long robe of silver stuff, and upon his head a cap of black velvet, ornamented with a string of diamonds, a plume, and a white double aigrette. The ecclesiastical peer presents the holy water to the King, and repeats the following prayer:—'Almighty and everlasting God, who hast raised thy servant, Louis, to the regal dignity, grant him throughout his reign to seek the good of his subjects, and that he may never wander from the paths of truth and justice.' This prayer ended, the two bishops take his Majesty, the one by the right arm, and the other by the left, and raising him from the bed, conduct him in procession to the church through the covered gallery, chanting appropriate prayers. The King having reached the church, the Holy Ampulla arrived at the principal door. It was brought from the Abbey of Saint Rémi by the grand prior, in a cover of cloth of gold, and mounted upon a white horse from the King's stable, covered with a housing of cloth of silver, richly embroidered, and led by the reins by two chief grooms of the stable. The grand prior was under a canopy of similar materials, carried by four barons, called *knights of the Holy Ampulla*, clad in white satin, with a mantle of black silk, and a white velvet scarf, trimmed with silver fringe; they wore the knight's cross, suspended round the neck by a black ribbon. At the four corners of the canopy, the peers named by the King as hostages of the Holy Ampulla were seen on horseback, each preceded by his esquire with a standard, bearing on one side the arms of France, and on the other those of the peer. They had solemnly sworn upon the Holy Gospels that no injury should be done to the Holy Ampulla,

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for the preservation of which they promised, if necessary, to risk their lives, and declared that they would become hostages until the return of the Holy Ampulla. The Holy Ampulla, which is so conspicuous an article in the consecration of our Kings, is a sort of small bottle filled, it is asserted, with a miraculous balm, brought by a dove to Saint Rémi, who died about the year 535. It never diminishes; it is treasured in the tomb of the ancient archbishop, whose body remains entire in a shrine of the abbey bearing his name; and it is enclosed in a silver gilt reliquary, enriched with diamonds and gems of various colours.[1] The Archbishop of Rheims received the Holy Ampulla at the gate of the church; on placing it in his hands, the grand prior addressed these words to him: 'To you, my lord, I entrust this precious treasure sent from Heaven to the great Saint Rémi, for the consecration of Clovis and the Kings his successors: but I request you, according to ancient custom, to bind yourself to restore it into my hands, after the consecration of our King Louis XVI.' The Archbishop took the required oath in these terms: 'I receive this Holy Ampulla with reverence, and promise you, upon the faith of a prelate, to restore it into your hands at the conclusion of the ceremony of the consecration.' The Cardinal de la Roche Aymon then took the marvellous phial, and deposited it upon the altar. A few minutes afterwards he approached the King, to whom he administered the oath, called *the protection oath*, for all the churches in subjection to the crown: a promise which his Majesty made sitting and covered. 'I promise,' said the King, 'to prevent the commission of rapine and injustice of every description by persons of all ranks. I swear to apply myself sincerely, and with all my might, to the extermination of heretics, condemned and pointed out by the Church, from all countries subject to my government.' After this oath, two ecclesiastical peers present the King to the assembly, and demand whether Louis XVI. is approved of for the dignity of King of France. A respectful silence announced the general consent.

"The Archbishop of Rheims presented the book of the Gospels to the King, placing his hands upon which, his Majesty took the

[1] This phial was afterwards broken to pieces upon the pavement of the abbey by the conventionary Ruhl, deputed for that purpose; the shrine and reliquaries, broken by his direction, were sent to La Monnaie.—*Note by the Editor.*

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oath to maintain and preserve the orders of the Holy Ghost and Saint Louis, and always to wear the cross of the latter order attached to a flame coloured silk ribbon; and to enforce the edict against duels, without any regard to the intercessions of any princes or potentates. The former part of this oath is of very little importance, and the second is broken every day.

"When the King, for the second time, received the sword of Charlemagne, he deposited it in the hands of the Maréchal de Clermont Tonnerre, officiating as constable, who held it point upwards during the ceremony of the consecration and coronation, as well as during the royal banquet. While the King was receiving and returning the sword of Charlemagne, several prayers were said. When they were finished, the officiating prelate opened the Holy Ampulla, and let a small quantity of oil drop from it, and this he diluted with some consecrated oil, called holy cream. The King prostrated himself before the altar upon a large square of violet-coloured velvet, embroidered with golden fleurs-de-lis, the old Archbishop Duc de Rheims being also prostrated on his right hand, and remaining in that lowly posture until the conclusion of the litanies chanted by four bishops alternately with the choir. At the end of the litanies the Archbishop of Rheims placed himself in his chair, and the King, kneeling down before him, was anointed upon the crown of the head, the breast, between the two shoulders, upon the right shoulder, the left, upon the joint of the right arm, and upon that of the left arm; at the same time the prelate pronounced certain prayers, the substance of which was as follows: 'May he humble the proud; may he be a lesson for the rich; may he be charitable towards the poor; and may he be a peacemaker among nations.' A little further on these words occur among the prayers: 'May he never abandon his rights over the kingdoms of the Saxons, Mercians, people of the north, and the Cimbri.' An anonymous author says that by the word Cimbri is meant the kingdom of England, over which our Kings expressly reserve their indisputable rights, from the time of Louis VIII., upon whom it was conferred by the free election of the people who had driven out John Sans Terre. After the seven anointings, the Archbishop of Rheims, assisted by the Bishops of Laon and Beauvais, laced up with gold laces the openings of the King's shirt and gown, and he,

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rising, was invested by the great chamberlain with the tunic, dalmatic, and royal mantle, lined and edged with ermine: these vestments are of violet velvet, embroidered with gold and fleurs-de-lis, and represent the dresses of sub-deacon, deacon, and priest; symbols by which, no doubt, the clergy seek to prove their union with the royal power. The King placed himself upon his knees again before the officiating Archbishop, who made the eighth unction upon the palm of the right hand, and the ninth and last upon that of the left; he afterwards placed a ring upon the fourth finger of the right hand, as a type of unlimited power, and of the intimate union thenceforward to reign between the King and his people. The Archbishop then took the royal sceptre from the altar, and put it into the King's right hand, and afterwards the hand of justice, which he put into the left hand. The sceptre is of enamelled gold, ornamented with Oriental pearls; it may be about six feet in height. Upon it is represented, in relief, Charlemagne, with the globe in his hand, seated in a chair of state, ornamented with two lions and two eagles. The hand of justice is a staff of massive gold, only one foot and a half in length, adorned with rubies and pearls, and terminated by a hand formed of ivory, or rather of the horn of a rhinoceros; and it has, at regular distances, three circles of leaves sparkling with pearls, garnets, and other precious stones.

"The Keeper of the Seals of France, officiating as Chancellor, then ascended the altar, and summoned the peers to the coronation in the following words:—'Monsieur, representing the Duke of Burgundy, come forward to this act,' etc. etc. The peers having approached the King, the Archbishop of Rheims took from the altar the crown of Charlemagne, which had been brought from Saint Denis, and placed it upon the King's head; immediately the ecclesiastical and lay peers raised their hands to support it there. In one of the prayers at this part of the ceremony an Oriental expression of great energy is made use of: 'May the King have the strength of the rhinoceros; and may he, like a rushing wind, drive before him the nations of our enemies, even to the extremity of the earth.' The crown of Charlemagne, which is preserved in the treasury of the Abbey of Saint Denis, is of gold, and enriched with rubies and sapphires; it is lined with a crimson satin cap, embroidered with gold, and sur-

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mounted by a golden fleur-de-lis, covered with thirty-six Oriental pearls.

"After these ceremonies the Archbishop Duc de Rheims took the King by the right arm, and, followed by the peers and all the officers of the Crown, led him to the throne raised upon a platform, where he seated him, reciting the enthroning prayers. In the first of these it is said: 'As you see the clergy nearer than the rest of the faithful to the holy altar, so ought you to take care and maintain it in the most honourable place.' Then the prelate took off his mitre, made a profound bow to the King, and kissed him, saying, '*Vivat Rex in æternum!*' The other ecclesiastical and lay peers also kissed the King, one after the other, and as soon as they returned to their places the gates of the church were opened; the people rushed in, and made the roofs resound with shouts of, '*Long live the King!*' which were re-echoed by the crowd of persons engaged in the ceremony, who filled the enclosure of the choir like an amphitheatre; an irresistible impulse gave rise to a clapping of hands, which became general; the grandees, the Court, the people, animated by the same enthusiasm, expressed it in the same manner.

"The Queen, overcome with emotion, was obliged to withdraw for a short time. When she reappeared she received a similar homage to that just offered by the nation to the King.

"While exclamations of joy resounded, the fowlers, according to a very ancient usage, set at liberty in the church numbers of birds, symbolising the monarch's regard for the people, and that men are never more truly free than under the reign of an enlightened, just, and beneficent Prince."—*Secret Correspondence of the Court of Louis XVI.*

Pursuits of the King.

"The only passion ever shown by Louis XVI. was for hunting. He was so much occupied by it that when I went up into his private closets at Versailles, after the 10th of August, I saw upon the staircase six frames, in which were seen statements of all his hunts, when Dauphin and when King. In them was detailed the number, kind, and quality of the game he had killed at each hunting party during every month, every season, and every year of his reign.

"The interior of his private apartments was thus arranged:

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a saloon, ornamented with gilded mouldings, displayed the engravings which had been dedicated to him; drawings of the canals he had dug, with the model of that of Burgundy; and the plan of the cones and works of Cherbourg. The upper hall contained his collection of geographical charts, spheres, globes, and also his geographical cabinet. There were to be seen drawings of maps which he had begun, and some that he had finished. He had a clever method of washing them in. His geographical memory was prodigious. Over the hall was the turning and joining room, furnished with ingenious instruments for working in wood. He inherited some from Louis XV., and he often busied himself, with Duret's assistance, in keeping them clean and bright. Above was the library of books published during his reign. The prayer books and manuscript books of Anne of Brittany, Francis I., the latter Valois, Louis XIV., Louis XV., and the Dauphin, formed the great hereditary library of the Château. Louis XVI. placed separately, in two apartments communicating with each other, the works of his own time, including a complete collection of Didot's editions, in vellum, every volume enclosed in a morocco case. There were several English works, among the rest the debates of the British Parliament, in a great number of volumes in folio (this is the Moniteur of England, a complete collection of which is so valuable and so scarce). By the side of this collection was to be seen a manuscript history of all the schemes for a descent upon that island, particularly that of Comte de Broglie. One of the presses of this cabinet was full of pasteboard boxes, containing papers relative to the House of Austria, inscribed in the King's own hand: '*Secret papers of my family respecting the House of Austria; papers of my family respecting the Houses of Stuart and Hanover.*' In an adjoining press were kept papers relative to Russia. Satirical works against Catherine II. and against Paul I. were sold in France under the name of histories; Louis XVI. collected and sealed up with his small seal the scandalous anecdotes against Catherine II., as well as the works of Rhulières, of which he had a copy, to be certain that the secret life of that Princess, which attracted the curiosity of her contemporaries, should not be made public by his means.

"Above the King's private library were a forge, two anvils, and a vast number of iron tools; various common locks, well

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made and perfect; some secret locks, and locks ornamented with gilt copper. It was there that the infamous Gamin, who afterwards accused the King of having tried to poison him, and was rewarded for his calumny with a pension of twelve thousand livres, taught him the art of lock-making. This Gamin, who became our guide, by order of the department and municipality of Versailles, did not, however, denounce the King on the 20th December 1792. He had been made the confidant of that Prince in an immense number of important commissions; the King had sent him the *Red Book*, from Paris, in a parcel; and the part which was concealed during the Constituent Assembly, still remained so in 1793. Gamin hid it in a part of the Château, inaccessible to everybody, and took it from under the shelves of a secret press before our eyes. This is a convincing proof that Louis XVI. hoped to return to his Château. When teaching Louis XVI. his trade Gamin took upon himself the tone and authority of a master. 'The King was good, forbearing, timid, inquisitive, and addicted to sleep,' said Gamin to me; 'he was fond to excess of lock-making, and he concealed himself from the Queen and the Court to file and forge with me. In order to convey his anvil and my own backwards and forwards we were obliged to use a thousand stratagems, the history of which would never end.' Above the King's and Gamin's forges and anvils was an observatory, erected upon a platform covered with lead. There, seated on an armchair, and assisted by a telescope, the King observed all that was passing in the courtyards of Versailles, the avenue of Paris, and the neighbouring gardens. He had taken a liking to Duret, one of the indoor servants of the palace, who sharpened his tools, cleaned his anvils, pasted his maps, and adjusted eye-glasses to the King's sight, who was short-sighted. This good Duret, and indeed all the indoor servants, spoke of their master with regret and affection, and with tears in their eyes.

"The King was born weak and delicate; but, from the age of twenty-four, he possessed a robust constitution, inherited from his mother, who was of the House of Saxe, celebrated for generations for its robustness. There were two men in Louis XVI., *the man of knowledge*, and *the man of will*. The King knew the history of his own family and of the first houses of

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France perfectly. He composed the instructions for M. de la Peyrouse's voyage round the world, which the minister thought were drawn up by several members of the Academy of Sciences. His memory retained an infinite number of names and situations. He remembered quantities and numbers wonderfully. One day an account was presented to him in which the minister had ranked among the expenses an item inserted in the account of the preceding year. 'There is a double charge,' said the King; 'bring me last year's account, and I will show it you there.' When the King was perfectly master of the details of any matter, and saw injustice, he was obdurate even to harshness. Then he would be obeyed instantly, in order to be sure that he was obeyed.

"But in important affairs of state the *man of will* was not to be found. Louis XVI. was upon the throne exactly what those weak temperaments whom nature has rendered incapable of an opinion are in society. In his pusillanimity, he gave his confidence to a minister; and although amidst various counsels he often knew which was the best, he never had the resolution to say, '*I prefer the opinion of such an one.*' Herein originated the misfortunes of the State."—Soulavie's *Historical and Political Memoirs of the Reign of Louis XVI.*, vol. ii.

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CHAPTER VI.

Severe winter—The Princesse de Lamballe appointed superintendant of the Household—The Comtesse Jules de Polignac appears at Court—M. de Vaudreuil—Duc and Duchesse de Duras—Fashionable games.

THE winter following the confinement of the Comtesse d'Artois was very severe; the recollection of the pleasure which sleighing-parties had given the Queen in her childhood made her wish to introduce similar ones in France. This amusement had already been known in that Court, as was proved by sleighs being found in the stables which had been used by the Dauphin, the father of Louis XVI. Some were constructed for the Queen in a more modern style. The Princes also ordered several; and in a few days there was a tolerable number of these vehicles. They were driven by the princes and noblemen of the Court. The noise of the bells and balls with which the harness of the horses was furnished, the elegance and whiteness of their plumes, the varied forms of the carriages, the gold with which they were all ornamented, rendered these parties delightful to the eye. The winter was very favourable to them, the snow remaining on the ground nearly six weeks; the drives in the park afforded a pleasure shared by the

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spectators.[1] No one imagined that any blame could attach to so innocent an amusement. But the party were tempted to extend their drives as far as the Champs Elysées; a few sleighs even crossed the boulevards; the ladies being masked, the Queen's enemies took the opportunity of saying that she had traversed the streets of Paris in a sleigh.

This became a matter of moment. The public discovered in it a predilection for the habits of Vienna; but all that Marie Antoinette did was criticised. Factions formed in courts do not openly carry insignia, as do those generated by revolutionary convulsions. They are not, however, on that account the less dangerous, and the Queen was never without a party against her.

Sleigh-driving, savouring of the Northern courts, had no favour among the Parisians. The Queen was informed of this; and although all the sleighs were preserved, and several subsequent winters lent themselves to the amusement, she would not resume it.

It was at the time of the sleighing-parties that the Queen became intimately acquainted with the Princesse de Lamballe, who made her appearance in them, wrapped in fur, with all the brilliancy and freshness of the age of twenty; the emblem of spring,

[1] Louis XVI., touched with the wretched condition of the poor of Versailles during the winter of 1776, had several cart-loads of wood distributed among them. Seeing one day a file of those vehicles passing by, while several noblemen were preparing to be drawn swiftly over the ice, he uttered these memorable words: "Gentlemen, here are my sleighs!"—*Note by the Editor.*

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peeping from under sable and ermine. Her situation, moreover, rendered her peculiarly interesting; married, when she was scarcely past childhood, to a young prince, who ruined himself by the contagious example of the Duc d'Orléans, she had had nothing to do from the time of her arrival in France but to weep. A widow at eighteen, and childless, she lived with the Duc de Penthièvre as an adopted daughter. She had the tenderest respect and attachment for that venerable Prince; but the Queen, though doing justice to his virtues, saw that the Duc de Penthièvre's way of life, whether at Paris or at his country-seat, could neither afford his young daughter-in-law the amusements suited to her time of life, nor insure her in the future an establishment such as she was deprived of by her widowhood. She determined, therefore, to establish her at Versailles; and for her sake revived the office of superintendant, which had been discontinued at Court since the death of Mademoiselle de Clermont. It is said that Maria Leczinska had decided that this place should continue vacant; the superintendant having so extensive a power in the houses of queens as to be frequently a restraint upon their inclinations. Differences which soon took place between Marie Antoinette and the Princesse de Lamballe respecting the official prerogatives of the latter, proved that the wife of Louis XV. had acted judiciously in abolishing the office; but a kind of treaty made between the Queen and the Princess smoothed all difficulties. The blame for too strong an asser-

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tion of claims fell upon a secretary of the superintendant's, who had been her adviser; and everything was so arranged that a firm friendship existed between these two Princesses down to the disastrous period which terminated their career.

Notwithstanding the enthusiasm which the splendour, graces, and kindness of the Queen generally inspired, secret intrigues continued in operation against her. A short time after the accession of Louis XVI. to the throne, the minister of the King's household was informed that a most offensive libel against the Queen was about to appear. The lieutenant of police deputed a man named Goupil, a police inspector, to trace this libel; he came soon after to say that he had found out the place where the work was being printed, and that it was at a country house near Yverdun. He had already got possession of two sheets, which contained the most atrocious calumnies, conveyed with a degree of art which might make them very dangerous to the Queen's reputation. Goupil said that he could obtain the rest, but that he should want a considerable sum for that purpose. Three thousand louis were given him, and very soon afterwards he brought the whole manuscript and all that had been printed to the lieutenant of police. He received a thousand louis more as a reward for his address and zeal; and a much more important office was about to be given him, when another spy, envious of Goupil's good fortune, gave information that Goupil himself was the author of the libel;

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that, ten years before, he had been put into the Bicêtre for swindling; and that Madame Goupil had only been three years out of the Salpétrière, where she had been placed under another name. This Madame Goupil was very pretty and very intriguing; she had found means to form an intimacy with Cardinal de Rohan, whom she led, it is said, to hope for a reconcilation with the Queen. All this affair was hushed up; but it shows that it was the Queen's fate to be incessantly attacked by the meanest and most odious machinations.[1]

Another woman, named Cahouette de Villers, whose husband held an office in the Treasury, being very irregular in conduct, and of a scheming turn of mind, had a mania for appearing in the eyes of her friends at Paris a person in favour at Court, to which she was not entitled either by birth or office. During the latter years of the life of Louis XV. she had made many dupes, and picked up considerable sums by passing herself off as the King's mistress. The fear of irritating Madame du Barry was, according to her, the only thing which prevented her enjoying that title openly: she came regularly to Versailles, kept herself concealed in a furnished lodging, and her dupes imagined she was secretly summoned to Court. This woman formed the scheme of getting admission, if possible, to the presence of the Queen, or at least causing it to be believed that she

[1] Readers wishing for fuller details of Goupil's manœuvres and their detection may consult *La Bastille Dévoilée.* The account contained there is too long for quotation here.

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had done so. She adopted as her lover Gabriel de Saint Charles, intendant of her Majesty's finances; an office, the privileges of which were confined to the right of entering the Queen's apartment on Sunday. Madame de Villers came every Saturday to Versailles with M. de Saint Charles, and lodged in his apartment; M. Campan was there several times; she painted tolerably well; she requested him to do her the favour to present to the Queen a portrait of her Majesty which she had just copied. M. Campan knew the woman's character, and refused her. A few days after, he saw on her Majesty's couch the portrait which he had declined to present to her; the Queen thought it badly painted, and gave orders that it should be carried back to the Princesse de Lamballe, who had sent it to her. The ill success of the portrait did not deter the manœuverer from following up her designs; she easily procured through M. de Saint Charles patents and orders signed by the Queen; she then set about imitating her writing, and composed a great number of notes and letters, as if written by her Majesty, in the tenderest and most familiar style. For many months she showed them as great secrets to several of her particular friends. Afterwards, she made the Queen appear to write to her, to procure various fancy articles. Under the pretext of wishing to execute her Majesty's commissions accurately, she gave these letters to the tradesmen to read; and succeeded in having it said, in many houses, that the Queen had a particular regard for her. She then enlarged

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her scheme, and represented the Queen as desiring her to borrow 200,000 francs which she had need of, but which she did not wish to ask of the King from his private funds. This letter being shown to M. Beranger, *fermier-général* of the finances, took effect; he thought himself fortunate in being able to render this assistance to his sovereign, and lost no time in sending the 200,000 francs to Madame de Villers. This first step was followed by some doubts, which he communicated to people better informed than himself of what was passing at Court; they added to his uneasiness; he then went to M. de Sartine, who unravelled the whole plot. The woman was sent to Saint Pelagie; and the unfortunate husband was ruined, by replacing the sum borrowed, and by paying for the jewels fraudulently purchased in the Queen's name; the forged letters were sent to her Majesty; I compared them in her presence with her own handwriting, and the only distinguishable difference was a little more regularity in the letters.

This trick, discovered and punished with prudence and without passion, produced no more sensation out of doors than that of the Inspector Goupil.

A year after the nomination of Madame de Lamballe[1] to the post of superintendant of the Queen's household, balls and quadrilles gave rise to the intimacy of her Majesty with the Comtesse Jules de Polignac. This lady really interested Marie

[1] Marie Thérèse de Savoie-Carignan, born 1748, killed September 1792. Married Louis de Bourbon-Penthièvre, Prince de Lamballe (who died about 1767), son of the Duc de Penthièvre.

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Antoinette. She was not rich, and generally lived upon her estate at Claye. The Queen was astonished at not having seen her at Court earlier. The confession that her want of fortune had even prevented her appearance at the celebration of the marriages of the Princes added to the interest which she had inspired.

The Queen was full of sensibility, and took delight in counteracting the injustice of fortune. The Countess was induced to come to Court by her husband's sister, Madame Diana de Polignac, who had been appointed lady of honour to the Comtesse d'Artois. The Comtesse Jules was really fond of a tranquil life; the impression she made at Court affected her but little; she felt only the attachment manifested for her by the Queen. I had occasion to see her from the commencement of her favour at Court; she often passed whole hours with me, while waiting for the Queen. She conversed with me freely and ingenuously about the honour, and at the same time the danger, she saw in the kindness of which she was the object. The Queen sought for the sweets of friendship; but can this gratification, so rare in any rank, exist between a Queen and a subject—when they are surrounded, moreover, by snares laid by the artifice of courtiers? This pardonable error was fatal to the happiness of Marie Antoinette.

The retiring character of the Comtesse Jules, afterwards Duchesse de Polignac, cannot be spoken of too favourably; but if her heart was incapable of

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forming ambitious projects, her family and friends in her fortune beheld their own, and endeavoured to secure the favour of the Queen.[1]

The Comtesse Diana, sister of M. de Polignac, and the Baron de Besenval and M. de Vaudreuil, particular friends of the Polignac family, made use of means, the success of which was infallible. One of my friends (Comte de Moustier), who was in their secret, came to tell me that Madame de Polignac was about to quit Versailles suddenly; that she would take leave of the Queen only in writing; that the Comtesse Diana and M. de Vaudreuil had dictated her letter, and that the whole affair was arranged for the purpose of stimulating the attachment of Marie Antoinette. The next day, when I went up to the palace, I found the Queen with a letter in her hand, which she was reading with much emotion; it was the letter from the Comtesse Jules; the Queen showed it to me. The Countess expressed in it her grief at leaving a Princess who had loaded her with kindness. The narrowness of her fortune compelled her to do so; but she was much more strongly impelled by the fear that the Queen's friendship, after having raised up dangerous enemies against her, might abandon her to their hatred, and to the regret of having lost the august favour of which she was the object.

[1] The Comtesse, afterwards Duchesse de Polignac, *née* Polastron, married the Comte (in 1780 the Duc) Jules de Polignac, the father of the Prince de Polignac of Napoleon's and of Charles X.'s time. She emigrated in 1789, and died at Vienna in 1793.

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This step produced the full effect that had been expected from it. A young and sensitive Queen cannot long bear the idea of contradiction. She busied herself in settling the Comtesse Jules near her, by making such a provision for her as should place her beyond anxiety. Her character suited the Queen; she had merely natural talents, no pedantry, no affectation of knowledge. She was of middle size; her complexion very fair, her eyebrows and hair dark brown, her teeth superb, her smile enchanting, and her whole person graceful. She was seen almost always in a demi-toilette, remarkable only for neatness and good taste. I do not think I ever once saw diamonds about her, even at the climax of her fortune, when she had the rank of Duchess at Court; I have always believed that her sincere attachment for the Queen, as much as her love of simplicity, induced her to avoid everything that might cause her to be thought a wealthy favourite. She had not one of the failings which usually accompany that position. She loved the persons who shared the Queen's affections, and was entirely free from jealousy. Marie Antoinette flattered herself that the Comtesse Jules and the Princesse de Lamballe would be her especial friends, and that she should possess a society formed according to her own taste. "I will receive them in my closet, or at Trianon," said she: "I will enjoy the comforts of private life, which exist not for us, unless we have the good sense to secure them for ourselves." The happiness the Queen thought to secure was destined to turn to vexation. All those

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courtiers who were not admitted to this intimacy became so many jealous and vindictive enemies.

It was necessary to make a suitable provision for the Countess. The place of first equerry, in reversion after the Comte de Tessé, given to Comte Jules unknown to the titular holder, displeased the family of Noailles. This family had just sustained another mortification; the appointment of the Princesse de Lamballe having in some degree rendered necessary the resignation of the Comtesse de Noailles, whose husband was thereupon made a marshal of France. The Princesse de Lamballe, although she did not quarrel with the Queen, was alarmed at the establishment of the Comtesse Jules at Court, and did not form, as her Majesty had hoped, a part of that intimate society which was in turn composed of Mesdames Jules and Diana de Polignac, d'Andlau, and de Châlon; and Messieurs de Guignes, de Coigny, d'Adhémar, de Besenval, lieutenant-colonel of the Swiss, de Polignac, de Vaudreuil, and de Guiche; the Prince de Ligne and the Duke of Dorset, the English ambassador, were also admitted.

It was a long time before the Comtesse Jules maintained any great state at Court. The Queen contented herself with giving her very fine apartments at the top of the marble staircase. The salary of first equerry, the trifling emoluments derived from M. de Polignac's regiment, added to their slender patrimony, and perhaps some small pension, at that time formed the whole fortune of the favourite. I never saw the Queen make her a present of value;

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I was even astonished one day at hearing her Majesty mention, with pleasure, that the Countess had gained ten thousand francs in the lottery: she was in great want of it, added the Queen.

Thus the Polignacs were not settled at Court in any degree of splendour which could justify complaints from others, and the substantial favours bestowed upon that family were less envied than the intimacy between them and their *protégés* and the Queen. Those who had no hope of entering the circle of the Comtesse Jules were made jealous by the opportunities of advancement it afforded.

However, at the time I speak of, the society around the Comtesse Jules was fully engaged in gratifying the young Queen. Of this the Marquis de Vaudreuil was a conspicuous member; he was a brilliant man, the friend and protector of men of letters and celebrated artists.[1]

[1] M. de Vaudreuil was passionately fond of the arts and of literature: he preferred encouraging them as an amateur rather than as a patron. He gave a dinner every week to a party consisting only of literary men and artists. The evening was spent in a saloon furnished with musical instruments, pencils, colours, brushes, and pens; and every one composed, or painted, or wrote, according to his taste or genius. M. de Vaudreuil himself pursued several of the fine arts. His voice was very pleasing, and he was a good musician. These accomplishments made him sought after, from his earliest entrance into society. The first time he visited Madame la Maréchale de Luxembourg, that lady said to him after supper, "I am told, sir, that you sing very well. I should be delighted to hear you. But if you do oblige me so far, pray do not sing any fine piece; no cantata, but some street ballad—just a mere street song. I like a natural style—something lively—something cheerful." M. de Vaudreuil begged leave to sing a street ballad then much in vogue. He did not know that Madame la Maréchale de Luxembourg was,

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The Baron de Besenval added to the bluntness of the Swiss all the adroitness of a French courtier. His fifty years and gray hairs made him enjoy among women the confidence inspired by mature age, although he had not given up the thought of love affairs. He talked of his native mountains with enthusiasm. He would at any time sing the "ranz des vaches" with tears in his eyes, and was

before her widowhood, Comtesse de Boufflers. He sang out with a full and sonorous voice the first line of the couplet, beginning, "When Boufflers was first seen at Court." The company immediately began coughing and sneezing. M. de Vaudreuil went on: "Venus' self shone less beauteous than she did." The noise and confusion increased. But after the third line: "To please her all eagerly sought," M. de Vaudreuil, perceiving that all eyes were fixed upon him, paused. "Pray go on, sir," said Madame la Maréchale, singing the last line herself: "And too well in his turn each succeeded." M. de Besenval's remarks respecting Madame de Luxembourg render the anecdote plausible. But perhaps, in such a delicate dilemma, she may be considered as having given a proof of presence of mind rather than of impudence.

According to the version of the Marquis de Gouffier, who was present on this occasion, the conversation turned on Time's ravages on beauty, when M. de Vaudreuil said, turning towards Madame de Luxembourg, "As to you, Madame, he has spared you—we still see that beauty which turned all the heads at Court, and has been celebrated by our best poets." "Yes," said the old lady gaily, "I remember when I first came out, there were a few songs written in my praise; there was this, for instance," and she began singing:

> "When Boufflers was first seen at Court,
> Venus' self shone less beauteous than she did.
> To please her all eagerly sought——"

Here she stopped, and did not give the last line:

> "And too well in his turn each succeeded."

"Go on, Madame la Maréchale," said De Vaudreuil. "Ah!" said she, smiling, "all that was so long ago that I remember no more of it."—*Note by the Editor.*

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the best story-teller in the Comtesse Jules' circle. The last new song or *bon-mot* and the gossip of the day were the sole topics of conversation in the Queen's parties. . Wit was banished from them. The Comtesse Diana, more inclined to literary pursuits than her sister-in-law, one day recommended her to read the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The latter replied, laughing, that she was perfectly acquainted with the Greek poet, and said to prove it:

"Homère était aveugle et jouait du hautbois." [1]
"Homer was blind and played on the hautboy."

[1] This lively repartee of the Duchesse de Polignac is a droll imitation of a line in the *Mercure Galant*. In the quarrel scene one of the lawyers says to his brother quill:

"*Ton-père* était aveugle et jouait du hautbois."
"Your father was blind and played on the hautboy."

It was impossible that the Duchesse de Polignac, with her wit and refined taste, should do otherwise than highly value learning; but the following anecdote conveys a poor idea of the education of some of the men admitted into her society:—

"In 1781 the Duchesse de Polignac was *enceinte*, and in order to be nearer at hand to pay her respects to the Queen, she requested Madame de Boufflers to let her her house, called d'Auteuil, and famous for its gardens *à l'Anglaise*. Madame de Boufflers, who was very fond of her country house, wished to refuse the Duchess without disobliging her, and replied in the following lines:—

"'Around you all are sedulous to please;
Your tranquil days roll on in cloudless ease;
Empire to you is but the source of joy,
Or if some grief awhile the charm destroy,
Attentive courtiers with assiduous art
Banish the transient feeling from your heart.
Far otherwise with me; if sorrows press,
Here, lonely, no one shares in my distress;
My only solace are these fragrant flowers,
Whose rich perfumes beguile my heavy hours.'

"Madame de Polignac showed these lines, and her flatterers, thinking they were written by Madame de Boufflers, pronounced them good for nothing. Of course the decision of the Duchess's

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The Queen found this sort of humour very much to her taste, and said that no pedant should ever be her friend.

Before the Queen fixed her assemblies at Madame de Polignac's, she occasionally passed the evening at the house of the Duc and Duchesse de Duras, where a brilliant party of young persons met together. They introduced a taste for trifling games, such as question and answer, *guerre panpan*, blindman's buff, and especially a game called *descampativos*. The people of Paris, always criticising, but always imitating the customs of the Court, were infected with the mania for these childish sports. Madame de Genlis, sketching the follies of the day in one of her plays, speaks of these famous *descampativos;* and also of the rage for making a friend, called the *inséparable*, until a whim or the slightest difference might occasion a total rupture.

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friends was carried to Madame la Maréchale. 'I am sorry, then,' said she, 'for poor Racine; for the lines are his.'"

The lines will be found in *Britannicus*, Act 2, Scene 3. They are addressed to Nero by Junia. Madame de Boufflers had merely made a slight alteration in the four last lines, where the name of Britannicus is introduced.—*Secret Correspondence of the Court: Reign of Louis XVI.*

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CHAPTER VII.

The Duc de Choiseul returns to Court—The Queen obtains a pension of 1200 francs for Chamfort—She invites Gluck to France and patronises music—Encouragement given to the art of printing—Turgot—M. de Saint Germain—Amusements at Court—Particulars of the household—Masked balls at the opera—The Queen goes there in a *fiacre*; slanderous reports—The heron plume—The Duc de Lauzun—The Queen's attachment to the Princesse de Lamballe and the Duchesse de Polignac—Anecdote of the Abbé de Vermond.

THE Duc de Choiseul had reappeared at Court on the ceremony of the King's coronation.[1] The state of public feeling on the subject gave his friends hope of seeing him again in administration, or in the Council of State; but the opposite party was too firmly fixed at Versailles, and the young Queen's influence was outweighed, in the mind of the King, by long-standing prejudices; she therefore gave up for ever her attempt to reinstate the Duke. Thus this Princess, who has been described as so ambitious, and so strenuously supporting the interest of the House of Austria, failed twice in the only scheme which could forward the views constantly attributed to her; and spent the whole of her reign surrounded by enemies of herself and her house.

[1] After his disgrace under Louis XV. in 1770.

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Marie Antoinette took little pains to promote literature and the fine arts. She had been annoyed in consequence of having ordered a performance of the *Connétable de Bourbon*, on the celebration of the marriage of Madame Clotilde with the Prince of Piedmont. The Court and the people of Paris censured as indecorous the naming characters in the piece after the reigning family, and that with which the new alliance was formed.[1] The reading of this piece by the Comte de Guibert in the Queen's closet had produced in her Majesty's circle that sort of enthusiasm which obscures the judgment. She promised herself she would have no more readings. Yet, at the request of M. de Cubières, the King's equerry, the Queen agreed to hear the reading of a comedy written by his brother. She collected her intimate circle, Messieurs de Coigny, de Vaudreuil, de Besenval, Mesdames de Polignac, de Châlon, etc., and to increase the number of judges, she admitted the two Parnys, the Chevalier de Bertin,[2] my father-in-law, and myself. Molé[3] read for the author. I never could satisfy myself by what magic the skil-

[1] The *Connétable de Bourbon* was not, it must be admitted, a fit piece for performance before all the French Princes. It would create some surprise if the whole Court should be found approving a composition in which the Constable above all things desires "the rare pleasure of humbling a king."—*Note by the Editor.*

[2] The Chevalier de Parny was already known by his erotic poems, and the Chevalier de Bertin by some valued verses.—*Madame Campan.*

[3] An actor who was during thirty years the delight of the Theatre Français. He preceded Fleury, and took the same line of character.—*Madame Campan.*

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ful reader gained our unanimous approbation of a ridiculous work. Surely the delightful voice of Molé, by awakening our recollection of the dramatic beauties of the French stage, prevented the wretched lines of Dorat Cubières from striking on our ears. I can assert that the exclamation *Charming! charming!* repeatedly interrupted the reader. The piece was admitted for performance at Fontainebleau; and for the first time the King had the curtain dropped before the end of the play. It was called the *Dramomane* or *Dramaturge.* All the characters died of poison in a pie. The Queen, highly disconcerted at having recommended this absurd production, announced that she would never hear another reading; and this time she kept her word.

The tragedy of *Mustapha and Zéangir*, by M. de Chamfort, was highly successful at the Court theatre at Fontainebleau. The Queen procured the author a pension of 1200 francs, but his play failed on being performed at Paris.

The spirit of opposition which prevailed in that city delighted in reversing the verdicts of the Court. The Queen determined never again to give any marked countenance to new dramatic works. She reserved her patronage for musical composers, and in a few years their art arrived at a perfection it had never before attained in France.

It was solely to gratify the Queen that the manager of the opera brought the first company of comic actors to Paris. Gluck, Piccini, and Sacchini were attracted there in succession. These eminent

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composers were treated with great distinction at Court. Immediately on his arrival in France, Gluck was admitted to the Queen's toilette, and she talked to him all the time he remained with her. She asked him one day whether he had nearly brought his grand opera of *Armide* to a conclusion, and whether it pleased him. Gluck replied very coolly, in his German accent, "Madame, it will soon be finished, and really it will be *superb*." There was a great outcry against the confidence with which the composer had spoken of one of his own productions.[1] The Queen defended him warmly; she insisted that he could not be ignorant of the merit of his works; that he well knew they were generally admired, and that no doubt he was afraid lest a modesty, merely dictated by politeness, should look like affectation in him.

The Queen did not confine her admiration to the lofty style of the French and Italian operas; she greatly valued Grétry's music, so well adapted to the spirit and feeling of the words. A great deal of the poetry set to music by Grétry is by Marmontel.

[1] Gluck often had to deal with self-sufficiency equal to his own. He was very reluctant to introduce long ballets into *Iphigenia*. Vestris deeply regretted that the opera was not terminated by a piece they called a *chaconne*, in which he displayed all his power. He complained to Gluck about it. Gluck, who treated his art with all the dignity it merits, replied that in so interesting a subject dancing would be misplaced. Being pressed another time by Vestris on the same subject, "A chaconne! a chaconne!" roared out the enraged musician, "we must describe the Greeks; and had the Greeks chaconnes?"—"They had not?" returned the astonished dancer; "faith then, so much the worse for them!"—*Note by the Editor.*

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The day after the first performance of *Zemira and Azor*, Marmontel and Grétry were presented to the Queen as she was passing through the gallery of Fontainebleau to go to mass. The Queen congratulated Grétry on the success of the new opera, and told him that she had dreamed of the enchanting effect of the trio by Zemira's father and sisters behind the magic mirror. Grétry, in a transport of joy, took Marmontel in his arms, "Ah! my friend," cried he, "excellent music may be made of this." "And execrable words," coolly observed Marmontel, to whom her Majesty had not addressed a single compliment.[1]

The most indifferent artists were permitted to have the honour of painting the Queen. A full-length portrait representing her in all the pomp of royalty was exhibited in the gallery of Versailles. This picture, which was intended for the Court of Vienna, was executed by a man who does not de-

[1] "The Court," says Grimm, "almost invariably confers favour upon the authors of the pieces performed at Fontainebleau, and those pieces may be performed at Paris immediately after their performance at Court. To this advantage may be attributed the importance attached to the privilege of being first judged of upon a stage where the result is never considered definitive, for it is agreed that a final appeal lies to the public of Paris from the judgments pronounced by the courtly public. And yet the manner of judging adopted at Court is very different now that it is allowable to applaud there as at other theatres. Formerly it was usual to listen in profound silence, which, while manifesting much respect for the presence of their Majesties, left vast uncertainty as to the feelings of the audience. Since the Queen has permitted this point of etiquette to be abrogated, it seldom happens that Paris annuls the decisions of Fontainebleau."—*Note by the Editor.*

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serve even to be named, and disgusted all people of taste. It seemed as if this art had, in France, retrograded several centuries.

The Queen had not that enlightened judgment, or even that mere taste, which enables Princes to foster and protect great talents. She confessed frankly that she saw no merit in any portrait beyond the likeness. When she went to the Louvre, she would run hastily over all the little "genre" pictures, and come out, as she acknowledged, without having once raised her eyes to the grand compositions.

There is no good portrait of the Queen, save that by Werthmüller, chief painter to the King of Sweden, which was sent to Stockholm; and that by Madame le Brun, which was saved from the revolutionary fury by the commissioners for the care of the furniture at Versailles.[1] The composition of the latter picture resembles that of Henrietta of France, the wife of the unfortunate Charles I., painted by Vandyke. Like Marie Antoinette, she is seated, surrounded by her children, and that resemblance adds to the melancholy interest raised by this beautiful production.

While admitting that the Queen gave no direct encouragement to any art but that of music, I should be wrong to pass over in silence the patronage con-

[1] See frontispieces to each volume. The English publishers are indebted to the courtesy of their colleagues Messrs. E. Plon et Cie for fine impressions of two portraits which add to the completeness and interest of the work, viz., one by Werthmüller named above, and one by Madame Vigée le Brun, a different one from that mentioned in the text.

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ferred by her and the Princes, brothers of the King, on the art of printing.[1]

To Marie Antoinette we are indebted for a splendid quarto edition of the works of Metastasio; to Monsieur, the King's brother, for a quarto Tasso, embellished with engravings after Cochin; and to the Comte d'Artois, for a small collection of select works, which is considered one of the *chef d'œuvres* of the press of the celebrated Didot.

In 1775, on the death of the Maréchal du Muy, the ascendency obtained by the sect of innovators occasioned M. de Saint Germain to be recalled to Court and made Minister at War. His first care was the destruction of the King's military house-

[1] In 1790 the King gave a proof of his particular good will to the bookselling trade. A contemporary writer says:

"A company consisting of the first Parisian booksellers, being on the eve of stopping payment, succeeded in laying before the King a statement of their distressed situation. The monarch was affected by it; he took from the civil list the sum of which the society stood in immediate need, and became security for the repayment of the remainder of the 1,200,000 livres, which they wanted to borrow. Louis XVI. wrote the following letter to M. Necker, at that time his Minister of Finance:—

"'The interest I take in the welfare of the associated libraries, and of the numerous workmen they employ, as well in Paris as in the country, and who would have been out of work without prompt assistance (the *caisse d'escompte*, and other capitalists, to whom they have made application, being unable to help them), has induced me to advance them, as a loan, out of the funds of my civil list, the 50,000 crowns which they wanted indispensably on the 31st of last month. The same motive leads me to secure, upon the same fund, such sums as they may be able to procure, in order, with the 50,000 crowns which I have advanced them, to make up the sum of 1,200,000 livres, to be repaid in ten years, including my advance; for the repayment of which I fix no particular time. Saint Cloud, the 4th August 1790 (Signed) LOUIS.'"—*Note by the Editor.*

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hold establishment, an imposing and effectual rampart round the sovereign power.

When Chancellor Maupeou obtained from Louis XV. the destruction of the Parliament and the exile of all the ancient magistrates, the Mousquetaires were charged with the execution of the commission for this purpose; and at the stroke of midnight, the presidents and members were all arrested, each by two Mousquetaires. In the spring of 1775 a popular insurrection had taken place in consequence of the high price of bread. M. Turgot's new regulation, which permitted unlimited trade in corn, was either its cause or the pretext for it;[1] and the King's household troops again rendered the greatest services to public tranquillity.

I have never been able to discover the true cause of the support given to M. de Saint Germain's policy by the Queen, unless in the marked favour shown to the captains and officers of the Body Guards, who by this reduction became the only soldiers of their rank entrusted with the safety of the sovereign; or else in the Queen's strong prejudice against the Duc d'Aiguillon, then commander of the light horse. M. de Saint Germain, however, retained fifty *gens d'armes* and fifty light horse

[1] Liberty and economy were M. Turgot's two principles. At Court he insisted chiefly on the application of the last. His numerous retrenchments offended the nobles and clergy. A female relative of the minister once asked a bishop whether it was not allowable to keep Easter and the Jubilee at the same time. "Well, madam," replied the prelate, "we live in economical times—I think it can be done."—*Note by the Editor.*

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to form a royal escort on State occasions; but in 1787 the King reduced both these military bodies. The Queen then said with satisfaction that at last she should see no more red coats in the gallery of Versailles.[1]

From 1775 to 1781 were the gayest years of the Queen's life. In the little journeys to Choisy, performances frequently took place at the theatre twice in one day: grand opera and French or Italian comedy at the usual hour; and at eleven at night they returned to the theatre for parodies in which the best actors of the opera presented themselves in whimsical parts and costumes. The celebrated dancer Guimard always took the leading characters in the latter performance; she danced better than she acted; her extreme leanness, and her weak hoarse voice, added to the burlesque in the parodied characters of Ernelinde and Iphigénie.

The most magnificent *fête* ever given to the Queen was one prepared for her by Monsieur, the King's brother, at Brunoy. That Prince did me the honour to admit me, and I followed her Majesty into the gardens, where she found in the first copse knights in full armour asleep at the foot of trees, on

[1] The Queen finally said to M. de Saint Germain, "What will you do with the forty-four *gens d'armes* and forty-four light horse that you keep up? Apparently they are to escort the King to the beds of justice." "No, Madame, they are to accompany him when *Te Deums* are sung." It must be understood that the Queen would have liked a total suppression, and that the King should have been guarded at Versailles as the Empress, her mother, and the Emperor are at Vienna; and that would have been simple and right.—*Secret Correspondence of the Court: Reign of Louis XVI.*

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which hung their spears and shields. The absence of the beauties who had incited the nephews of Charlemagne and the gallants of that period to lofty deeds was supposed to occasion this lethargic slumber. But when the Queen appeared at the entrance of the copse they were on foot in an instant, and melodious voices announced their eagerness to display their valour. They then hastened into a vast arena, magnificently decorated in the exact style of the ancient tournaments. Fifty dancers dressed as pages presented to the knights twenty-five superb black horses, and twenty-five of a dazzling whiteness, all most richly caparisoned. The party led by Augustus Vestris wore the Queen's colours. Picq, ballet-master at the Russian Court, commanded the opposing band. There was running at the negro's head, tilting, and, lastly, combats *à outrance*, perfectly well imitated. Although the spectators were aware that the Queen's colours could not but be victorious, they did not the less enjoy the apparent uncertainty.

Nearly all the agreeable women of Paris were ranged upon the steps which surrounded the area of the tourney. The Queen, surrounded by the royal family and the whole Court, was placed beneath an elevated canopy. A play, followed by a ballet-pantomime and a ball, terminated the *fête*. Fireworks and illuminations were not spared. Finally, from a prodigiously high scaffold, placed on a rising ground, the words *Vive Louis! Vive Marie Antoinette!* were shown in the air in the midst of a very dark but calm night.

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Pleasure was the sole pursuit of every one of this young family, with the exception of the King. Their love of it was perpetually encouraged by a crowd of those officious people who, by anticipating the desires and even the passions of princes, find means of showing their zeal and hope to gain or maintain favour for themselves.

Who would have dared to check the amusements of a Queen, young, lively, and handsome? A mother or a husband alone would have had the right to do it; and the King threw no impediment in the way of Marie Antoinette's inclinations. His long indifference had been followed by admiration and love. He was a slave to all the wishes of the Queen, who, delighted with the happy change in the heart and habits of the King, did not sufficiently conceal the ascendency she was gaining over him.

The King went to bed every night at eleven precisely; he was very methodical, and nothing was allowed to interfere with his rules. The noise which the Queen unavoidably made when she returned very late from the evenings which she spent with the Princesse de Guéménée, or the Duc de Duras, at last annoyed the King, and it was amicably agreed that the Queen should apprise him when she intended to sit up late. He then began to sleep in his own apartment, which had never before happened from the time of their marriage.

During the winter the Queen attended the opera balls with a single lady of the palace, and always found there Monsieur and the Comte d'Artois. Her

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people concealed their liveries under gray cloth greatcoats. She never thought she was recognised, while all the time she was known to the whole assembly, from the first moment she entered the theatre; they pretended, however, not to recognise her, and some masquerade manœuvre was always adopted to give her the pleasure of fancying herself incognito.

Louis XVI. determined once to accompany the Queen to a masked ball; it was agreed that the King should hold not only the *grand* but the *petit coucher*, as if actually going to bed. The Queen went to his apartment through the inner corridors of the palace, followed by one of her women with a black domino; she assisted him to put it on, and they went alone to the chapel court, where a carriage waited for them, with the captain of the guard of the quarter, and a lady of the palace. The King was but little amused, spoke only to two or three persons, who knew him immediately, and found nothing to admire at the masquerade but Punches and Harlequins, which served as a joke against him for the royal family, who often amused themselves with laughing at him about it.

An event, simple in itself, brought lamentable suspicions upon the Queen. She was going out one evening with the Duchesse de Luynes, lady of the palace, when her carriage broke down at the entrance into Paris; she was obliged to alight; the Duchess led her into a shop, while a footman called a *fiacre*. As they were masked, if they had but

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known how to keep silence, the event would never have been known; but to ride in a *fiacre* is so unusual an adventure for a Queen that she had hardly entered the opera-house when she could not help saying to some persons whom she met there: "That I should be in a *fiacre!* Is it not droll?"[1]

From that moment all Paris was informed of the adventure of the *fiacre*. It was said that everything connected with it was mysterious; that the Queen had kept an assignation in a private house with the Duc de Coigny. He was indeed very well received at Court, but equally so by the King

[1] An adventure which took place at the masked ball given by the Comte de Viry is whispered about. It was as follows: After the banquet the Queen withdrew with her suite, and returned shortly afterwards, masked, to the ball. At three o'clock in the morning she was walking with the Duchesse de La Vauguyon; the two masks were accosted by a young foreign nobleman, who was unmasked, and who conversed with them a long time, taking them for two women of quality with whom he was acquainted. The mistake gave rise to a singular conversation, which amused her Majesty the more inasmuch as the topics were light and agreeable, without being indiscreet. Two gentlemen in masks came up and joined the party; after laughing a good deal together they separated. The two ladies intimated a desire to withdraw; the German baron conducted them; a very plain carriage drew up; when they were about to enter it, Madame de La Vauguyon unmasked. Judge of the stranger's surprise when, on turning round, he recognised the other lady, who had likewise unmasked; respect and confusion succeeded to familiarity. The affability of the charming Princess, however, reassured the foreigner, who, besides, had the advantage of being known to her Majesty. The Queen recommended secrecy, and left him. He complied no doubt, but to little purpose, as two or three spectators were not equally discreet. Meeting the Queen a few days afterwards, she asked him if he had kept her secret, in a tone which showed that she did not consider it of the slightest importance.—*Secret Correspondence of the Court: Reign of Louis XVI.*

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and Queen. These accusations of gallantry once set afloat, there were no longer any bounds to the calumnies circulated at Paris. If, during the chase or at cards, the Queen spoke to Lord Edward Dillon, De Lambertye, or others, they were so many favoured lovers. The people of Paris did not know that none of those young persons were admitted into the Queen's private circle of friends; the Queen went about Paris in disguise, and had made use of a *fiacre;* and a single instance of levity gives room for the suspicion of others. Conscious of innocence, and well knowing that all about her must do justice to her private life, the Queen spoke of these reports with contempt, contenting herself with the supposition that some folly in the young men mentioned had given rise to them. She therefore left off speaking to them or even looking at them. Their vanity took alarm at this, and revenge induced them either to say, or to leave others to think, that they were unfortunate enough to please no longer. Other young coxcombs, placing themselves near the private box which the Queen occupied incognito when she attended the public theatre at Versailles, had the presumption to imagine that they were noticed by her; and I have known such notions entertained merely on account of the Queen's requesting one of those gentlemen to inquire behind the scenes whether it would be long before the commencement of the second piece.

The list of persons received into the Queen's

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closet which I gave in the preceding chapter was placed in the hands of the ushers of the chamber by the Princesse de Lamballe; and the persons there enumerated could only present themselves to enjoy the distinction on those days when the Queen chose to be with her intimates in a private manner; and this was only when she was slightly indisposed. People of the first rank at Court sometimes requested special audiences of her; the Queen then received them in a room within that called the closet of the women on duty, and these women announced them in her Majesty's apartment.

The Duc de Lauzun (since Duc de Biron),[1] who made himself conspicuous in the Revolution, among the associates of the Duc d'Orléans, has left behind him some manuscript memoirs, in which he insults Marie Antoinette. He relates one anecdote respecting a heron plume. The following is the true history of the matter.

The Duc de Lauzun had a good deal of wit, and chivalrous manners. The Queen was accustomed to see him at the King's suppers, and at the house of the Princesse de Guéménée, and always showed him attention. One day he made his appearance at Madame de Guéménée's in uniform, and with the most magnificent plume of white heron's feathers that it was possible to behold. The Queen admired the plume, and he offered it to her through

[1] Armand Louis, Duc de Lauzun (1747-1793), afterwards (1788) Duc de Biron; commanded the army of the Rhine 1792, and against the Vendeans in 1793 as General Biron, but was guillotined in 1793.

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the Princesse de Guéménée. As he had worn it the Queen had not imagined that he could think of giving it to her; much embarrassed with the present which she had, as it were, drawn upon herself, she did not like to refuse it, nor did she know whether she ought to make one in return; afraid, if she did give anything, of giving either too much or too little, she contented herself with once letting M. de Lauzun see her adorned with the plume. In his secret memoirs the Duke attaches an importance to his present, which proves him utterly unworthy of an honour accorded only to his name and rank.[1]

[1] It is interesting to compare the Duc de Lauzun's version of this incident (not, however, to be found in the edition of his memoirs published since those of Madame Campan were compiled) with Madame Campan's narrative: "Madame de Guéménée," he says, "came up to me and asked in an undertone, laughing, 'Are you very much attached to a certain white heron plume which was in your helmet when you took leave? The Queen is dying for it: will you refuse it her?' I replied that I should not dare to offer it to her, but that I should be most happy if she would condescend to receive it from Madame de Guéménée. I sent to Paris for it, and Madame de Guéménée gave it to the Queen the next evening. She wore it on the following day; and at dinner she asked me what I thought of her head-dress. I replied that I liked it very much. 'I never,' said she, with infinite affability, 'saw myself so becomingly dressed before.' It certainly would have been better if she had not said anything about it, for the Duc de Coigny took notice both of the feather and the phrase. He asked whence the plume came. The Queen said, with some embarrassment, that I had brought it to Madame de Guéménée from my travels, and that she had given it to her. The Duc de Coigny told Madame de Guéménée in the evening, with much asperity, that nothing could be more indecorous than the footing I was on with the Queen; that to act the lover thus publicly was a thing unheard of; and that it was incredible that she should look as if she approved of it. What he said was not well received, and he began to contrive means to get me out of the way."—*Note by the Editor.*

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A short time afterwards he solicited an audience; the Queen granted it, as she would have done to any other courtier of equal rank. I was in the room adjoining that in which he was received; a few minutes after his arrival the Queen re-opened the door, and said aloud, and in an angry tone of voice, "Go, sir." M. de Lauzun bowed low, and withdrew. The Queen was much agitated. She said to me: "That man shall never again come within my doors." A few years before the Revolution of 1789 the Maréchal de Biron died. The Duc de Lauzun, heir to his name, aspired to the important post of colonel of the regiment of French guards. The Queen, however, procured it for the Duc du Châtelet. The Duc de Biron espoused the cause of the Duc d'Orléans, and became one of the most violent enemies of Marie Antoinette.

It is with reluctance that I enter minutely on a defence of the Queen against two infamous accusations with which libellers have dared to swell their envenomed volumes. I mean the unworthy suspicions of too strong an attachment for the Comte d'Artois, and of the motives for the tender friendship which subsisted between the Queen, the Princesse de Lamballe, and the Duchesse de Polignac. I do not believe that the Comte d'Artois was, during his own youth, and that of the Queen, so much smitten as has been said with the loveliness of his sister-in-law; I can affirm that I always saw that Prince maintain the most respectful demeanour towards the Queen; that she always spoke

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of his good-nature and cheerfulness with that freedom which attends only the purest sentiments; and that none of those about the Queen ever saw in the affection she manifested towards the Comte d'Artois more than that of a kind and tender sister for her youngest brother. As to the intimate connection between Marie Antoinette and the ladies I have named, it never had, nor could have, any other motive than the very innocent wish to secure herself two friends in the midst of a numerous Court; and notwithstanding this intimacy, that tone of respect observed by persons of the most exalted rank towards majesty never ceased to be maintained.[1]

The Queen, much occupied with the society of

[1] The following note was written by the Queen to the Duchesse de Polignac, in answer to a letter in which the latter, after an illness that had confined her a few days to Paris, told the Queen that she should soon have the honour of paying her respects to her:—"Doubtless it is I who am the more impatient to embrace you, for to-morrow I shall come and dine with you in Paris." This close friendship between a sovereign and a subject is almost unexampled; unprincipled people, therefore, attributed a criminal motive to it. When a scheme for dethroning the unfortunate Louis XVI. was once determined on, it was thought proper to begin by degrading him, and the most efficacious way was to attack the morals of the Queen. It was also essential for the success of this infernal plot that the Duchesse de Polignac should be lowered in public opinion. For if the Duchess could be made to appear deserving of universal contempt, the opprobrium cast on her would stain her august friend also. Libels against Madame de Polignac, therefore, were not spared; but all intelligent persons who were well acquainted with the Duc and Duchesse de Polignac, were convinced that the authors of those libels were vile calumniators, hired by the enemies of the King and Queen. The Duchess was beloved by her household, and in the bosom of her family she led a very decorous and regular life.—*History of Marie Antoinette*, by Montjoie.

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Madame de Polignac, and an unbroken series of amusements, found less time for the Abbé de Vermond; he therefore resolved to retire from Court. The world did him the honour to believe that he had hazarded remonstrances upon his august pupil's frivolous employment of her time, and that he considered himself, both as an ecclesiastic and as instructor, now out of place at Court. But the world was deceived: his dissatisfaction arose purely from the favour shown to the Comtesse Jules. After a fortnight's absence we saw him at Versailles again, resuming his usual functions.

The Queen could express herself with winning graciousness to persons who merited her praise. When M. Loustonneau was appointed to the reversion of the post of first surgeon to the King, he came to make his acknowledgments. He was much beloved by the poor, to whom he had chiefly devoted his talents, spending nearly thirty thousand francs a year on indigent sufferers. The Queen replied to his thanks by saying: "You are satisfied, sir; but I am far from being so with the inhabitants of Versailles. On the news of your appointment the town should have been illuminated."—"How so, Madame?" asked the astonished surgeon, who was excessively modest. "Why," replied the Queen, "if the poor whom you have succoured for the past twenty years had each placed a single candle in their windows it would have been the most beautiful illumination ever witnessed."

The Queen did not limit her kindness to friendly

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words. There was frequently seen in the apartments of Versailles a veteran captain of the grenadiers of France, called the Chevalier d'Orville, who, for four years, had been soliciting from the Minister of War the post of major, or of King's lieutenant. He was known to be very poor; but he supported his lot without complaining of this vexatious delay in rewarding his honourable services. He regularly attended the Maréchal de Ségur, at the hour appointed for receiving the numerous solicitations in his department. One day the Maréchal said to him: "You are still at Versailles, M. d'Orville?"—"Sir," he replied, "you may observe that, by this board of the flooring where I regularly place myself; it is already worn down several lines by the weight of my body." The Queen frequently stood at the window of her bed-chamber to observe with her glass the people walking in the park. Sometimes she inquired the names of those who were unknown to her. One day she saw the Chevalier d'Orville passing, and asked me the name of that knight of Saint Louis, whom she had seen everywhere for a long time past. I knew who he was, and related his history. "That must be put an end to," said the Queen, with some vivacity. "Such an example of indifference is calculated to discourage our soldiers." Next day, in crossing the gallery to go to mass, the Queen perceived the Chevalier d'Orville; she went directly towards him. The poor man fell back in the recess of a window, looking to the right and left to discover the

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person whom the Queen was seeking, when she thus addressed him: "M. d'Orville, you have been several years at Versailles, soliciting a majority or a King's lieutenancy. You must have very powerless patrons."—"I have none, Madame," replied the Chevalier, in great confusion. "Well! I will take you under my protection. To-morrow at the same hour be here with a petition, and a memorial of your services." A fortnight after M. d'Orville was appointed King's lieutenant, either at La Rochelle or at Rochefort.[1]

[1] Louis XVI. vied with his Queen in benevolent actions of this kind. An old officer had in vain solicited a pension during the administration of the Duc de Choiseul. He returned to the charge in the times of the Marquis de Montesnard and the Duc d'Aiguillon. He urged his claims to Comte du Muy, who made a note of them. Tired of so many fruitless efforts, he at last appeared at the King's supper, and having placed himself so as to be seen and heard, cried out at a moment when silence prevailed, "*Sire.*" The people near him said, "What are you about? This is not the way to speak to the King."—"I fear nothing," said he, and raising his voice, repeated, "*Sire.*" The King, much surprised, looked at him and said, "What do you want, sir."—"Sire," answered he, "I am seventy years of age; I have served your Majesty more than fifty years, and I am dying for want."—"Have you a memorial?" replied the King. "Yes, Sire, I have."—"Give it to me;" and his Majesty took it without saying anything more. Next morning he was sent for by the King, who said, "Sir, I grant you an annuity of 1500 livres out of my privy purse, and you may go and receive the first year's payment, which is now due" (*Secret Correspondence of the Court: Reign of Louis XVI.*) The King preferred to spend money in charity rather than in luxury or magnificence. Once during his absence, M. d'Angivillers caused an unused room in the King's apartment to be repaired at a cost of 30,000 francs. On his return the King made Versailles resound with complaints against M. d'Angivillers: "With that sum I could have made thirty families happy," he said.—*Note by the Editor.*

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CHAPTER VIII.

Joseph II.'s visit to France—His reception at the opera—*Fête* given to him by the Queen at Trianon—The Queen *enceinte*—Voltaire's return to Paris—Duel between the Comte d'Artois and the Duc de Bourbon—Return of the Chevalier d'Eon to France—Particulars relative to his missions, and the causes of his disguise—Night promenades upon the terrace of Trianon—Couplets against the Queen—Indignation of Louis XVI.—Birth of Madame.

From the time of Louis XVI.'s accession to the throne, the Queen had been expecting a visit from her brother, the Emperor Joseph II. That Prince was the constant theme of her discourse. She boasted of his intelligence, his love of occupation, his military knowledge, and the perfect simplicity of his manners. Those about her Majesty ardently wished to see at Versailles a Prince so worthy of his rank. At length the coming of Joseph II., under the title of Count Falkenstein, was announced, and the very day on which he would be at Versailles was mentioned. The first embraces between the Queen and her august brother took place in the presence of all the Queen's household. The sight of their emotion was extremely affecting.

The Emperor was at first generally admired in France; learned men, well-informed officers, and

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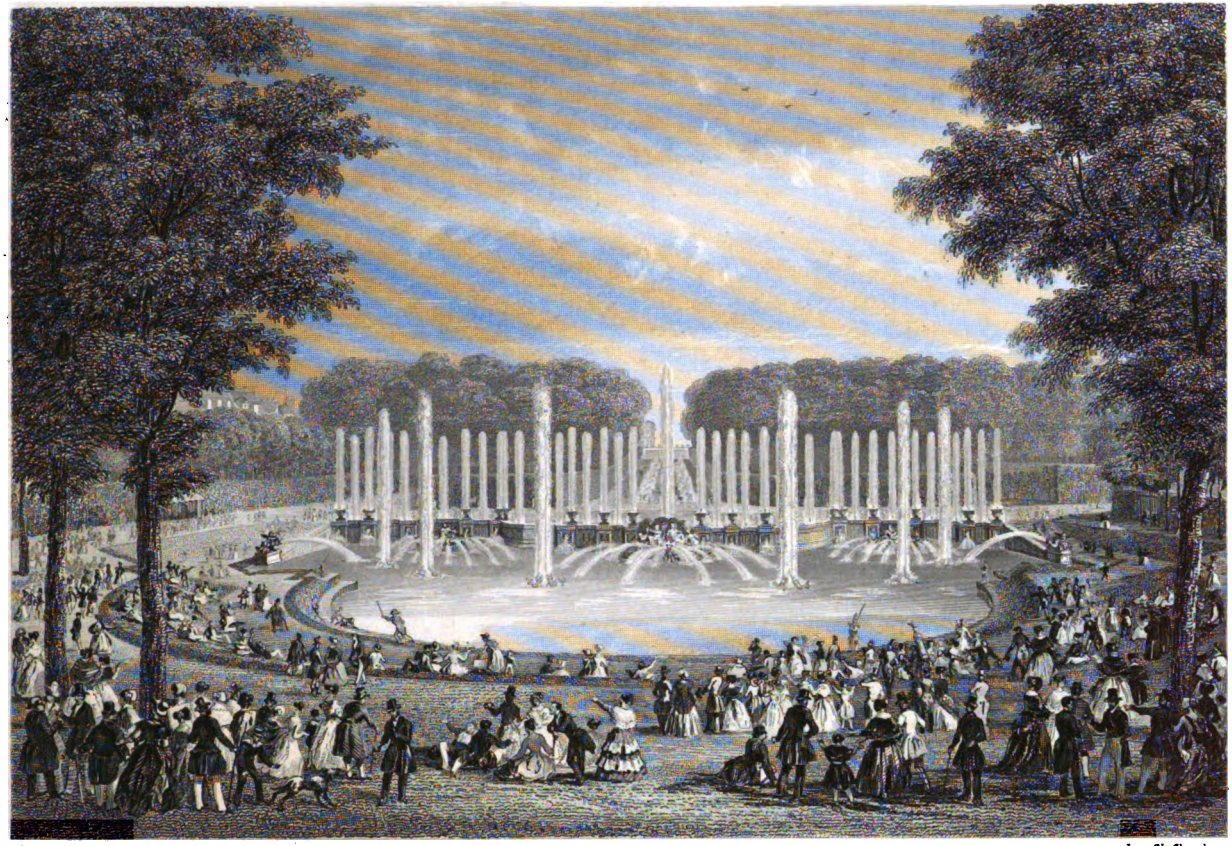

Rouargue frères del & sc

Imp Ch Chardon

LE BASSIN DE NEPTUNE

(à Versailles)

Paris, Richard Bentley and Son, 1883

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celebrated artists appreciated the extent of his information. He made less impression at Court, and very little in the private circle of the King and Queen. His eccentric manners, his frankness, often degenerating into rudeness, and his evidently affected simplicity—all these characteristics caused him to be looked upon as a Prince rather singular than admirable. The Queen spoke to him about the apartment she had prepared for him in the Château; the Emperor answered that he would not accept it, and that while travelling he always lodged at a *cabaret* (that was his very expression); the Queen insisted, and assured him that he should be at perfect liberty, and placed out of the reach of noise. He replied that he knew the Château of Versailles was very large, and that so many scoundrels lived there that he could well find a place; but that his *valet de chambre* had made up his camp-bed in a lodging house, and there he would stay.

He dined with the King and Queen, and supped with the whole family. He appeared to take an interest in the young Princess Elizabeth, then just past childhood, and blooming in all the freshness of that age. An intended marriage between him and this young sister of the King was reported at the time, but I believe it had no foundation in truth.

The table was still served by females only, when the Queen dined in private with the King, the royal family, or crowned heads.[1] I was present

[1] The custom was, even supposing dinner to have commenced, if a Princess of the blood arrived, and she was asked to sit down

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at the Queen's dinner almost every day. The Emperor would talk much and fluently; he expressed himself in French with facility, and the singularity of his expressions added a zest to his conversation. I have often heard him say that he liked *spectaculous* objects, when he meant to express such things as formed a show, or a scene worthy of interest. He disguised none of his prejudices against the etiquette and customs of the Court of France; and even in the presence of the King made them the subject of his sarcasms.[1] The King smiled, but never made any answer; the Queen appeared pained. The Emperor frequently terminated his observations

at the Queen's table, the comptrollers and gentlemen-in-waiting came immediately to attend, and the Queen's women withdrew. These had succeeded the maids of honour in several parts of their service, and had preserved some of their privileges. One day the Duchesse d'Orléans arrived at Fontainebleau, at the Queen's dinner-hour. The Queen invited her to the table, and herself motioned to her women to leave the room, and let the men take their places. Her Majesty said she was resolved to continue a privilege which kept places of that description most honourable, and rendered them suitable for ladies of nobility without fortune. Madame de Misery, Baronne de Biache, the Queen's first lady of the chamber, to whom I was made reversioner, was a daughter of M. le Comte de Chemant, and her grandmother was a Montmorency. M. le Prince de Tingry, in the presence of the Queen, used to call her *cousin*. The ancient household of the Kings of France had prerogatives acknowledged in the State. Many of the offices were tenable only by those of noble blood, and were sold at from 40,000 to 300,000 francs. A collection of edicts of the Kings in favour of the prerogatives and right of precedence of the persons holding office in the royal household is still in existence.—*Madame Campan.*

[1] Joseph II. had a taste, or perhaps we may say a talent, for satire. A collection of his letters has been published, in which his bitter raillery spares neither the nobility nor the clergy, nor even his brother Kings.—*Note by the Editor.*

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upon the objects in Paris which he had admired by reproaching the King for suffering himself to remain in ignorance of them. He could not conceive how such a wealth of pictures should remain shut up in the dust of immense stores;[1] and told him one day that but for the practice of placing some of them in the apartments of Versailles he would not know even the principal *chef d'œuvres* that he possessed.[2] He also reproached him for not having visited the Hotel des Invalides nor the École Militaire; and even went so far as to tell him before us that he ought not only to know what Paris contained, but to travel in France, and reside a few days in each of his large towns.

At last the Queen was really hurt at the Emperor's indiscretion, and gave him a few lectures upon the freedom with which he allowed himself to lecture others. One day she was busied in signing warrants and orders for payment for her household, and was conversing with M. Augeard, her secretary for such matters, who presented the papers one after another to be signed, and replaced them in his portfolio. While this was going forward, the Emperor walked about the room; all at once he stood still, to reproach the Queen rather severely for signing all

[1] Shortly after the Emperor's departure, the Comte d'Angivillers laid before the King plans for the erection of the Museum, which was then begun.—*Madame Campan.*

[2] The Emperor loudly censured the existing practice of allowing shopkeepers to erect shops near the outward walls of all the palaces, and even to establish something like a fair in the galleries of Versailles and Fontainebleau, and even upon the landings of the staircases.—*Madame Campan.*

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those papers without reading them, or, at least, without running her eye over them; and he spoke most judiciously to her upon the danger of signing her name inconsiderately. The Queen answered, that very wise principles might be very ill applied; that her secretary, who deserved her implicit confidence, was at that moment laying before her nothing but orders for payment of the quarter's expenses of her household, registered in the Chamber of Accounts; and that she ran no risk of incautiously giving her signature.

The Queen's toilette was likewise a never-failing subject for animadversion with the Emperor. He blamed her for having introduced too many new fashions; and teased her about her use of rouge. One day, while she was laying on more of it than usual, before going to the play, he pointed out a lady who was in the room, and who was, in truth, highly painted. "A little more under the eyes," said the Emperor to the Queen; "lay on the rouge like a fury, as that lady does." The Queen entreated her brother to refrain from his jokes, or at all events to address them, when they were so rude, to her alone.

The Queen had made an appointment to meet her brother at the Italian theatre; she changed her mind, and went to the French theatre, sending a page to the Italian theatre to request the Emperor to come to her there. He left his box, lighted by the comedian Clairval, and attended by M. de la Ferté, comptroller of the Queen's privy purse, who was much hurt at hearing his Imperial Majesty, after

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kindly expressing his regret at not being present during the Italian performance, say to Clairval, "Your young Queen is very giddy; but, luckily, you Frenchmen have no great objection to that."

I was with my father-in-law in one of the Queen's apartments when the Emperor came to wait for her there, and knowing that M. Campan was librarian, he conversed with him about such books as would of course be found in the Queen's library. After talking of our most celebrated authors, he casually said, "There are doubtless no works on finance or on administration here?"

These words were followed by his opinion on all that had been written on those topics, and the different systems of our two famous ministers, Sully and Colbert; on the errors which were daily committed in France, in points so essential to the prosperity of the empire; and on the reform he himself would make at Vienna; holding M. Campan by the button, he spent more than an hour talking vehemently, and without the slightest reserve, about the French Government. My father-in-law and myself maintained profound silence, as much from astonishment as from respect; and when we were alone we agreed not to speak of this interview.

The Emperor was fond of telling secret anecdotes of the Italian Courts that he had visited. The jealous quarrels between the King and Queen of Naples amused him highly; he described to the life the manner and speech of that sovereign, and the simplicity with which he used to go and solicit the first

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chamberlain to obtain permission to return to the nuptial bed, when the angry Queen had banished him from it. The time which he was made to wait for this reconciliation was calculated between the Queen and her chamberlain, and always proportioned to the gravity of the offence. He also related several very amusing stories relative to the Court of Parma, of which he spoke with no little contempt. If what this Prince said of those Courts, and even of Vienna, had been written down, the whole would have formed an interesting collection. The Emperor told the King that the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the King of Naples being together, the former said a great deal about the changes he had effected in his State. The Grand Duke had issued a mass of new edicts, in order to carry the precepts of the economists into execution, and trusted that in so doing he was labouring for the welfare of his people. The King of Naples suffered him to go on speaking for a long time, and then merely asked how many Neapolitan families there were in Tuscany. The Duke soon reckoned them up, as they were but few. "Well, brother," replied the King of Naples, "I do not understand the indifference of your people towards your great reforms; for I have four times the number of Tuscan families settled in my States that you have of Neapolitan families in yours."

The Queen being at the opera with the Emperor, the latter did not wish to show himself; but she took him by the hand, and with a little gentle force drew him to the front of the box. This kind of

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presentation to the public was most warmly received. The performance was *Iphigenia in Aulis*, and for the second time the chorus, *Chantons, celebrons notre Reine!* was called for with universal plaudits.

A *fête* of a novel description was given at Petit Trianon. The art with which the English garden was not illuminated but lighted, produced a charming effect. Earthen lamps, concealed by boards painted green, threw light upon the beds of shrubs and flowers, and brought out their varied tints. Several hundred burning faggots in the moat behind the Temple of Love made a blaze of light, which rendered that spot the most brilliant in the garden. After all, this evening's entertainment had nothing remarkable about it but the good taste of the artists, yet it was much talked of. The situation did not allow the admission of a great part of the Court; those who were uninvited were dissatisfied; and the people, who never forgive any *fêtes* but those they share in, so exaggerated the cost of this little *fête* as to make it appear that the faggots burnt in the moat had required the destruction of a whole forest. The Queen being informed of these reports, was determined to know exactly how much wood had been consumed; and she found that fifteen hundred faggots had sufficed to keep up the fire until four o'clock in the morning.

After staying a few months the Emperor left France, promising his sister to come and see her again. All the officers of the Queen's chamber had many opportunities of serving him during his stay,

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and expected that he would make them presents before his departure. Their oath of office positively forbade them to receive a gift from any foreign Prince; they had therefore agreed to refuse the Emperor's presents at first, but to ask the time necessary for obtaining permission to accept them. The Emperor, probably informed of this custom, relieved the good people from their difficulty by setting off without making a single present.

About the latter end of 1777 the Queen, being alone in her closet, sent for my father-in-law and myself, and giving us her hand to kiss, told us that, looking upon us both as persons deeply interested in her happiness, she wished to receive our congratulations: that at length she was the Queen of France, and that she hoped soon to have children; that till now she had concealed her grief, but that she had shed many tears in secret.

Dating from this happy but long-delayed moment, the King's attachment to the Queen assumed every characteristic of love; the good Lassone, first physician to the King and Queen, frequently spoke to me of the uneasiness that the King's indifference, the cause of which he had been so long in overcoming, had given him, and appeared to me at that time to entertain no anxiety except of a very different description.

In the winter of 1778 the King's permission for the return of Voltaire, after an absence of twenty-seven years, was obtained. A few strict persons considered this concession on the part of the

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Court very injudicious. The Emperor, on leaving France, passed by the Château of Ferney without stopping there. He had advised the Queen not to suffer Voltaire to be presented to her. A lady belonging to the Court learned the Emperor's opinion on that point, and reproached him with his want of enthusiasm towards the greatest genius of the age. He replied that for the good of the people he should always endeavour to profit by the knowledge of the philosophers; but that his own business of sovereign would always prevent his ranking himself amongst that sect. The clergy also took steps to hinder Voltaire's appearance at Court. Paris, however, carried to the highest pitch the honours and enthusiasm shown to the great poet. It was very unwise to let Paris pronounce with such transport an opinion so opposite to that of the Court. This was pointed out to the Queen, and she was told that, without conferring on Voltaire the honour of a presentation, she might see him in the State apartments. She was not averse to following this advice, and appeared embarrassed solely about what she should say to him. She was recommended to talk about nothing but the *Henriade*, *Mérope*, and *Zaira*. The Queen replied that she would still consult a few other persons in whom she had great confidence. The next day she announced that it was irrevocably decided Voltaire should not see any member of the royal family—his writings being too antagonistic to religion and morals. "It is, however, strange," said the Queen, "that while we refuse to admit Voltaire

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into our presence as the leader of philosophical writers, the Maréchale de Mouchy should have presented to me some years ago Madame Geoffrin, who owed her celebrity to the title of foster-mother of the philosophers."

On the occasion of the duel of the Comte d'Artois with the Prince de Bourbon the Queen determined privately to see the Baron de Besenval, who was to be one of the witnesses, in order to communicate the King's intentions. I have read with infinite pain the manner in which that simple fact is perverted in M. de Besenval's Memoirs.[1] He is right in saying that M. Campan led him through the upper corridors of the Château, and introduced him into an apartment unknown to him; but the air of romance given to the interview is equally culpable and ridiculous. M. de Besenval says that he found himself, without knowing how he came there, in an apartment unadorned, but very conveniently furnished, of the existence of which he was till then utterly ignorant. He was astonished, he adds, not that the Queen should have so many facilities, but that she should have ventured to procure them. Ten printed sheets of the woman Lamotte's libels contain nothing so injurious to the character of Marie Antoinette as these lines, written by a man whom she honoured by undeserved kindness. He could not have had any opportunity of knowing the existence of these apartments, which consisted

[1] See the *Mémoires de Baron de Besenval*, tome i., in the *Collection des Mémoires sur la Révolution.*

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of a very small antechamber, a bed-chamber, and a closet. Ever since the Queen had occupied her own apartment, these had been appropriated to her Majesty's lady of honour in cases of illness, and were actually so used when the Queen was confined. It was so important that it should not be known the Queen had spoken to the Baron before the duel that she had determined to go through her inner room into this little apartment, to which M. Campan was to conduct him. When men write of recent times they should be scrupulously exact, and not indulge in exaggerations or inventions.

The Baron de Besenval appears mightily surprised at the Queen's sudden coolness, and refers it to the fickleness of her disposition. I can explain the reason for the change by repeating what her Majesty said to me at the time; and I will not alter one of her expressions. Speaking of the strange presumption of men, and the reserve with which women ought always to treat them, the Queen added that age did not deprive them of the hope of pleasing, if they retained any agreeable qualities; that she had treated the Baron de Besenval as a brave Swiss, agreeable, polished, and witty, whose gray hairs had induced her to look upon him as a man whom she might see without harm; but that she had been much deceived. Her Majesty, after having enjoined me to the strictest secrecy, told me that, finding herself alone with the Baron, he began to address her with so much gallantry that she was thrown into the utmost astonishment, and

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that he was mad enough to fall upon his knees, and make her a declaration in form. The Queen added, that she said to him: "Rise, sir; the King shall be ignorant of an offence which would disgrace you for ever;" that the Baron grew pale and stammered apologies; that she left her closet without saying another word, and that since that time she hardly ever spoke to him. "It is delightful to have friends," said the Queen; "but in a situation like mine it is sometimes difficult for the friends of our friends to suit us."

In the beginning of the year 1778 Mademoiselle d'Éon obtained permission to return to France, on condition that she should appear there in female dress. The Comte de Vergennes entreated my father, M. Genet, chief clerk of Foreign Affairs, who had long known the Chevalier d'Éon, to receive that strange personage at his house, to guide and restrain, if possible, her ardent disposition. The Queen, on learning her arrival at Versailles, sent a footman to desire my father to bring her into her presence; my father thought it his duty first to inform the Minister of her Majesty's wish. The Comte de Vergennes expressed himself pleased with my father's prudence, and desired that he would accompany him to the Queen. The Minister had a few minutes' audience; her Majesty came out of her closet with him, and condescended to express to my father the regret she felt at having troubled him to no purpose; and added, smiling, that a few words from M. de Vergennes had for ever cured her of her curiosity. The discovery in London of the

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true sex of this pretended woman makes it probable that the few words uttered by the Minister contained a solution of the enigma.

The Chevalier d'Éon had been useful in Russia as a spy of Louis XV. While very young he had found means to introduce himself at the Court of the Empress Elizabeth, and served that sovereign in the capacity of reader. Resuming afterwards his military dress, he served with honour and was wounded. Appointed chief secretary of legation, and afterwards minister plenipotentiary at London, he unpardonably insulted Comte de Guerchy, the ambassador. The official order for the Chevalier's return to France was actually delivered to the King's Council; but Louis XV. delayed the departure of the courier who was to be its bearer, and sent off another courier privately, who gave the Chevalier d'Éon a letter in his own writing, in which he said, "I know that you have served me as effectually in the dress of a woman as in that which you now wear. Resume it instantly; withdraw into the city; I warn you that the King yesterday signed an order for your return to France; you are not safe in your hotel, and you would here find too powerful enemies." I heard the Chevalier d'Éon repeat the contents of this letter, in which Louis XV. thus separated himself from the King of France, several times at my father's. The Chevalier, or rather the *Chevalière* d'Éon had preserved all the King's letters. Messieurs de Maurepas and de Vergennes wished to get them out of his hands, as they were afraid he would print them.

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This eccentric being had long solicited permission to return to France; but it was necessary to find a way of sparing the family he had offended the insult they would see in his return; he was therefore made to resume the costume of that sex to which in France everything is pardoned. The desire to see his native land once more determined him to submit to the condition, but he revenged himself by combining the long train of his gown and the three deep ruffles on his sleeves, with the attitude and conversation of a grenadier, which made him very disagreeable company.[1]

[1] The account given by Madame Campan of the Chevalier d'Éon is now known to be incorrect in many particulars. Enough details for most readers will be found in the Duc de Broglie's *Secret of the King*, vol. ii., chaps. vi. and x., and at p. 89, vol. ii. of that work, where the Duke refers to the letter of most dubious authenticity spoken of by Madame Campan. The following details will be sufficient for these memoirs:—The Chevalier Charles d'Éon de Beaumont (born 1728, died 1810) was an ex-captain of dragoons, employed in both the open and the secret diplomacy of Louis XV. When at the Embassy in London he quarrelled with the ambassador, his superior, the Comte de Guerchy (Marquis de Nangis); and used his possession of papers concerning the secret diplomacy to shield himself. It was when hiding in London, in 1765, on account of this business, that he seems first to have assumed woman's dress, which he retained apparently chiefly from love of notoriety. In 1775 a formal agreement with the French Court, made by the instrumentality of Beaumarchais, of all people in the world, permitted him to return to France, retaining the dress of a woman. He went back to France, but again came to England and died there. He had been a brave and distinguished officer, but his form and a certain coldness of temperament always remarked in him assisted him in his assumption of another sex. There appears to be no truth in the story of his proceedings at the Russian Court, and his appearing in female attire was a surprise to those who must have known of any earlier affair of the sort.

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At last, the event so long desired by the Queen, and by all those who wished her well, took place; her Majesty became *enceinte*. The King was in ecstasies. Never was there a more united or happier couple. The disposition of Louis XVI. entirely altered, and became prepossessing and conciliatory; and the Queen was amply compensated for the uneasiness which the King's indifference during the early part of their union had caused her.

The summer of 1778 was extremely hot. July and August passed, but the air was not cooled by a single storm. The Queen spent whole days in close rooms, and could not sleep until she had breathed the fresh night air, walking with the Princesses and her brothers upon the terrace under her apartments. These promenades at first gave rise to no remark; but it occurred to some of the party to enjoy the music of wind instruments during these fine summer nights. The musicians belonging to the chapel were ordered to perform pieces suited to instruments of that description, upon steps constructed in the middle of the garden. The Queen, seated on one of the terrace benches, enjoyed the effect of this music, surrounded by the whole of the royal family with the exception of the King, who joined them but twice, disliking to change his hour of going to bed.

Nothing could be more innocent than these parties; yet Paris, France, nay, all Europe, were soon canvassing them in a manner most disadvantageous to the reputation of Marie Antoinette. It

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is true that all the inhabitants of Versailles enjoyed these serenades, and that there was a crowd near the spot from eleven at night until two or three in the morning. The windows of the ground floor occupied by Monsieur and Madame[1] were kept open, and the terrace was perfectly well lighted by the numerous wax candles burning in the two apartments. Lamps were likewise placed in the garden, and the lights of the orchestra illuminated the rest of the place.

I do not know whether a few incautious females might not have ventured farther, and wandered to the bottom of the park; it may have been so; but the Queen, Madame, and the Comtesse d'Artois were always arm-in-arm, and never left the terrace. The Princesses were not remarkable when seated on the benches, being dressed in cambric muslin gowns, with large straw hats and muslin veils, a costume universally adopted by females at that time; but when standing up their different figures always distinguished them; and the persons present stood on one side to let them pass. It is true that when they seated themselves upon the benches private individuals would sometimes, to their great amusement, sit down by their side. A young clerk in the war department, either not knowing or pretending not to know the Queen, spoke to her of the beauty of the night, and the delightful effect of the music. The Queen, fancying she was not recognised, amused herself by keeping up the incognito,

[1] The wife of Monsieur, the Comte de Provence.

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and they talked of several private families of Versailles, consisting of persons belonging to the King's household or her own. After a few minutes the Queen and Princesses rose to walk, and on leaving the bench curtsied to the clerk. The young man knowing, or having subsequently discovered, that he had been conversing with the Queen, boasted of it in his office. He was merely desired to hold his tongue; and so little attention did he excite that the Revolution found him still only a clerk. Another evening one of Monsieur's body-guard seated himself near the Princesses, and, knowing them, left the place where he was sitting and placed himself before the Queen, to tell her that he was very fortunate in being able to seize an opportunity of imploring the kindness of his sovereign; that he was "soliciting at Court"—at the word *soliciting* the Queen and Princesses rose hastily and withdrew into Madame's apartment.[1] I was at the Queen's residence that day. She talked of this little occurrence all the time of her *coucher;* though she only complained that one of Monsieur's guards should have had the effrontery to speak to her. Her Majesty added that he ought to have respected her *incognito;* and that that was not the place where he should have ventured to make a request. Madame had recognised him, and talked of making a complaint to his captain; the Queen opposed it, attributing his error to his ignorance and provincial origin.

[1] Soulavie has most criminally perverted these two facts.—*Madame Campan.*

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The most scandalous libels were based on these two insignificant occurrences, which I have related with scrupulous exactness. Nothing could be more false than those calumnies. It must be confessed, however, that such meetings were liable to ill consequences. I ventured to say as much to the Queen, and informed her that one evening, when her Majesty had beckoned to me to go and speak to her, I thought I recognised on the bench on which she was sitting two women deeply veiled, and keeping profound silence; that those women were the Comtesse du Barry and her sister-in-law; and that my suspicions were confirmed when, at a few paces from the seat, and nearer to her Majesty, I met a tall footman belonging to Madame du Barry, whom I had seen in her service all the time she resided at Court.

My advice was useless. Misled by the pleasure she found in these promenades, and secure in the consciousness of blameless conduct, the Queen would not see the lamentable results which must necessarily follow. This was very unfortunate; for, besides the mortifications they brought upon her, it is highly probable that they prompted the vile plot which gave rise to the Cardinal de Rohan's fatal error.

Having enjoyed these evening promenades about a month, the Queen ordered a private concert within the colonnade which contained the group of Pluto and Proserpine. Sentinels were placed at all the entrances, and ordered to admit within the colonnade only such persons as should produce tickets

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signed by my father-in-law. A fine concert was performed there by the musicians of the chapel and the female musicians belonging to the Queen's chamber. The Queen went with Mesdames de Polignac, de Chalon, and d'Andlau, and Messieurs de Polignac, de Coigny, de Besenval, and de Vaudreuil; there were also a few equerries present. Her Majesty gave me permission to attend the concert with some of my female relations. There was no music upon the terrace. The crowd of inquisitive people, whom the sentinels kept at a distance from the enclosure of the colonnade, went away highly discontented; the small number of persons admitted no doubt occasioned jealousy, and gave rise to offensive comments which were caught up by the public with avidity. I do not pretend to apologise for the kind of amusements with which the Queen indulged herself during this and the following summer; the consequences were so lamentable that the error was no doubt very great; but what I have said respecting the character of these promenades may be relied on as true.

When the season for evening walks was at an end, odious couplets were circulated in Paris; the Queen was treated in them in the most insulting manner; her situation ranked among her enemies persons attached to the only Prince who for several years had appeared likely to give heirs to the crown. People uttered the most inconsiderate language; and those improper conversations took place in societies wherein the imminent danger of violating to so

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criminal an extent both truth and the respect due to sovereigns ought to have been better understood. A few days before the Queen's confinement a whole volume of manuscript songs concerning her and all the ladies about her remarkable for rank or station was thrown down in the *œil-de-bœuf*.[1] This manuscript was immediately put into the hands of the King, who was highly incensed at it, and said that he had himself been at those promenades; that he had seen nothing connected with them but what was perfectly harmless; that such songs would disturb the harmony of twenty families in the Court and city; that it was a capital crime to have made any against the Queen herself; and that he wished the author of the infamous libels to be discovered and punished. A fortnight afterwards it was known publicly that the verses were by M. Champcenetz de Riquebourg,[2] who was not even reprimanded.

I knew for a certainty that the King spoke to M. de Maurepas, before two of his most confidential servants, respecting the risk which he saw the Queen ran from these night walks upon the terrace of Versailles, which the public ventured to censure thus openly, and that the old minister had the cruelty to advise that she should be suffered to go

[1] A large room at Versailles lighted by a bull's-eye window, and used as a waiting-room.

[2] The author of a great many songs, some of which are very well written. Lively and satirical by nature, he did not lose either his cheerfulness or his carelessness before the revolutionary tribunal. After hearing his own sentence read, he asked his judges if he might not be allowed to find a substitute.—*Madame Campan.*

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on; she possessed talent; her friends were very ambitious, and longed to see her take a part in public affairs; and to let her acquire the reputation of levity would do no harm. M. de Vergennes was as hostile to the Queen's influence as M. de Maurepas. It may therefore be fairly presumed, since the Prime Minister durst point out to his King an advantage to be gained by the Queen's discrediting herself, that he and M. de Vergennes employed all means within the reach of powerful ministers in order to ruin her in the opinion of the public.[1]

The Queen's *accouchement* approached; *Te Deums* were sung and prayers offered up in all the cathedrals. On the 11th of December 1778 the royal family, the Princes of the blood, and the great officers of State, passed the night in the rooms adjoining the Queen's bed-chamber. Madame, the King's daughter, came into the world before midday on the 19th of December.[2] The etiquette of allowing all persons indiscriminately to enter at the moment of the delivery of a queen was observed with such exaggeration that when the *accoucheur*

[1] Madame Campan's account of the conduct of the Comte de Maurepas is confirmed by a writer with whom she is very seldom in accordance. "It is known," says Soulavie, "that in 1774, 1775, and 1776, M. de Maurepas stirred up private quarrels between Louis XVI. and his wife on pretence of the Queen's inconsiderate conduct. M. de Maurepas was fond of interfering in family disputes. The go-betweens whom he made use of raised the strongest prejudices against the Queen."—*Note by the Editor.*

[2] Marie Thérèse Charlotte (1778-1851), Madame Royale; married in 1799 Louis, Duc d'Angoulême, eldest son of the Comte d'Artois.

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said aloud, *La Reine va s'accoucher*, the persons who poured into the chamber were so numerous that the rush nearly destroyed the Queen. During the night the King had taken the precaution to have the enormous tapestry screens which surrounded her Majesty's bed secured with cords; but for this they certainly would have been thrown down upon her. It was impossible to move about the chamber, which was filled with so motley a crowd that one might have fancied himself in some place of public amusement. Two Savoyards got upon the furniture for a better sight of the Queen, who was placed opposite the fireplace. The noise and the sex of the infant, with which the Queen was made acquainted by a signal previously agreed on, as it is said, with the Princesse de Lamballe, or some error of the *accoucheur*, brought on symptoms which threatened fatal consequences; the *accoucheur* exclaimed, "Give her air—warm water—she must be bled in the foot!" The windows were stopped up; the King opened them with a strength which his affection for the Queen gave him at the moment. They were of great height, and pasted over with strips of paper all round. The basin of hot water not being brought quickly enough, the *accoucheur* desired the chief surgeon to use his lancet without waiting for it. He did so; the blood streamed out freely, and the Queen opened her eyes. The Princesse de Lamballe was carried through the crowd in a state of insensibility. The *valets de chambre* and pages dragged out by the collar such inconsiderate

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persons as would not leave the room. This cruel custom was abolished ever afterwards. The Princes of the family, the Princes of the blood, the chancellor and the ministers are surely sufficient to attest the legitimacy of an hereditary Prince. The Queen was snatched from the very jaws of death ; she was not conscious of having been bled, and on being replaced in bed, asked why she had a linen bandage upon her foot.

The delight which succeeded the moment of fear was equally lively and sincere. We were all embracing each other, and shedding tears of joy. The Comte d'Esterhazy and the Prince de Poix, to whom I was the first to announce that the Queen was restored to life, embraced me in the midst of the cabinet of the nobles. We little imagined, in our happiness at her escape from death, for how much more terrible a fate our beloved Princess was reserved.

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Annex to Chapter VIII.

We are tempted to add some specimens of the Emperor Joseph's correspondence, which forcibly demonstrate the vigour, shrewdness, and originality of his mind, and complete the portrait left of him by Madame Campan. The wholesale, eccentric, and somewhat cruel ecclesiastical economies effected by Joseph II., which reduced the Papal power in his dominions, suppressed bishoprics and monasteries, prohibited pilgrimages and pillaged churches, drew from Pius VI. many ineffectual remonstrances;[1] to one of these the Emperor made the following reply:—

To Pope Pius VI.

Most Holy Father—The funds of the clergy of my dominions are not destined, as has been boldly said at Rome, to expire with my reign, but rather to become a relief to my people; and as their continuation, as well as the displeasure which has burst forth upon this subject, are within the jurisdiction of history, posterity will be masters of the matter without our co-operation; this, then, will be a monument of my time, and I hope not the only one.

I have suppressed the superfluous convents, and the still more superfluous societies; their revenues serve to support curates and to ameliorate the primary institutions; but amidst

[1] See Coxe's *House of Austria*, vol. iii. p. 490.

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all the confidence in matters of account which I am obliged to place in persons employed by the State, the funds of the latter have with me absolutely nothing in common with those of the Church. An action should be judged of only by its intention, and the results of this action can only be appreciated by their success, which will not be known for some years.

I see, however, that logic is not the same at Rome as it is in my dominions, and hence arises this want of harmony between Italy and the empire.

If your Holiness had taken the charitable care to inform yourself, at the proper source, of what was passing in my territories, many things would not have happened; but there were people at Rome who, as it appears to me, would have darkness spread itself more and more over our poor globe.

You have now the brief account of the causes which have compelled my arrangements; I hope you will excuse the conciseness of my letter on consideration that I have neither the time nor the talent necessary for discussing so vast a theme in the manner used in a Roman *museum*.

I pray God still long to preserve you to His Church, and to send one of His angels before you to prepare for you the way to heaven.—Your most obedient son in Jesus Christ, JOSEPH.

VIENNA, *July* 1784.

Few sovereigns have given their reasons for refusing appointments with the fulness and point of the following letter:—

To a Lady.

MADAM—I do not think that it is amongst the duties of a monarch to grant places to one of his subjects merely because he is a gentleman. That, however, is the inference from the request you have made to me. Your late husband was, you say, a distinguished general, a gentleman of good family, and thence you conclude that my kindness to your family can do no less than give a company of foot to your second son, lately returned from his travels.

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Madam, a man may be the son of a general and yet have no talent for command. A man may be of a good family and yet possess no other merit than that which he owes to chance—the name of gentleman.

I know your son, and I know what makes the soldier; and this twofold knowledge convinces me that your son has not the disposition of a warrior, and that he is too full of his birth to leave the country a hope of his ever rendering it any important service.

What you are to be pitied for, Madam, is, that your son is not fit either for an officer, a statesman, or a priest; in a word, that he is nothing more than a gentleman in the most extended acceptation of the word.

You may be thankful to that destiny, which, in refusing talents to your son, has taken care to put him in possession of great wealth, which will sufficiently compensate him for other deficiencies, and enable him at the same time to dispense with any favour from me.

I hope you will be impartial enough to see the reasons which prompt me to refuse your request. It may be disagreeable to you, but I consider it necessary. Farewell, Madam.—Your sincere well-wisher, JOSEPH.

LACHSENBURG, *4th August* 1787.

The application of another anxious and somewhat covetous mother was answered with still more decision and irony:—

To a Lady.

MADAM—You know my disposition; you are not ignorant that the society of the ladies is to me a mere recreation, and that I have never sacrificed my principles to the fair sex. I pay but little attention to recommendations, and I only take them into consideration when the person in whose behalf I may be solicited possesses real merit.

Two of your sons are already loaded with favours. The eldest, who is not yet twenty, is chief of a squadron in my army, and the younger has obtained a canonry at Cologne, from the

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Elector, my brother. What would you have more? Would you have the first a general and the second a bishop?

In France you may see colonels in leading strings, and in Spain the royal princes command armies even at eighteen; hence Prince Stahremberg forced them to retreat so often that they were never able all the rest of their lives to comprehend any other manœuvre.

It is necessary to be sincere at Court, and severe in the field, stoical without obduracy, magnanimous without weakness, and to gain the esteem of our enemies by the justice of our actions; and this, Madam, is what I aim at. JOSEPH.

VIENNA, *September* 1787.

(From the inedited Letters of Joseph II., published at Paris, by Persan, 1822.)

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CHAPTER IX.

Public rejoicings—Death of Maria Theresa; the Queen's affliction —Anecdotes of Maria Theresa—Birth of the Dauphin—Bankruptcy of the Prince de Guéménée—The Duchesse de Polignac is appointed governess of the Children of France—Jealousy of the Court—Mode of life at Trianon—Presumption of the Duc de Fronsac—American War—Franklin—M. de La Fayette—Order for admitting none but gentlemen to the rank of officer —Spirit of the Third Estate.

DURING the alarm for the life of the Queen, regret at not possessing an heir to the throne was not even thought of. The King himself was wholly occupied with the care of preserving an adored wife. The young Princess was presented to her mother. "Poor little one," said the Queen, "you were not wished for, but you are not on that account less dear to me. A son would have been rather the property of the State. You shall be mine; you shall have my undivided care, shall share all my happiness, and console me in all my troubles."

The King despatched a courier to Paris; and wrote letters himself to Vienna, by the Queen's bedside; and part of the rejoicings ordered took place in the capital.[1]

[1] The Queen's propitious delivery was celebrated throughout France. The birth of Madame inspired more than one poet. The following madrigal, by Imbert, was much admired:—

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A great number of attendants watched near the Queen during the first nights of her confinement. This custom distressed her; she knew how to feel for others, and ordered large armchairs for her women, the backs of which were capable of being let down by springs, and which served perfectly well instead of beds.

M. de Lassone, the chief physician, the chief surgeon, the chief apothecary, the principal officers of the buttery, etc., were likewise nine nights without going to bed. The royal children were watched for a long time, and one of the women on duty remained, nightly, up and dressed, during the first three years from their birth.

The Queen made her entry into Paris for the churching. One hundred maidens were portioned and married at Notre Dame. There were few popular acclamations, but her Majesty was perfectly well received at the opera.[1]

"A Dauphin we asked of our Queen;
A Princess announces him near:
Since one of the Graces is seen,
Young Cupid will quickly appear."

"Pour toi, France, un Dauphin doit naître,
Une Princesse vient pour en être témoin;
Sitot qu'on voit une Grâce parâitre,
Croyez que l'Amour n'est pas loin."

Note by the Editor.

[1] The acts of benevolence performed by the officers of the city did not prevent them from amusing the people with the usual *fêtes*. There were illuminations, *feux de joie*, fireworks, fountains of wine, and distributions of bread and sausages. All the theatres of Paris were open *gratis*—which was a new treat to the public. Every theatre was full before noon, and the performance began at two o'clock. The French comedians performed *Zaira*, and the little piece called *Le Florentin*. In spite of all the precautions taken to preserve the King's box for the charcoal

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A few days after the Queen's recovery from her confinement, the Curé of the Magdelaine de la Cité at Paris wrote to M. Campan and requested a private interview with him; it was to desire he would deliver into the hands of the Queen a little box containing her wedding ring, with this note written by the Curé: "I have received under the seal of confession the ring which I send to your Majesty; with an avowal that it was stolen from you in 1771, in order to be used in sorceries, to prevent you having any children." On seeing her ring again the Queen said that she had in fact lost it about seven years before, while washing her hands, and that she had resolved to use no endeavour to discover the superstitious woman who had done her the injury.

The Queen's attachment to the Comtesse Jules increased every day; she went frequently to her house at Paris, and even took up her own abode at the Château de la Muette to be nearer during

venders, who were accustomed to occupy it on similar occasions, as the *poissardes*, or market-women did that of the Queen, their places were occupied when they arrived. They were informed of this, and thought it very strange. These two chief classes of the lower orders were seen disputing upon etiquette, with almost as much pertinacity as noblemen or sovereign courts. They demanded to know why the boxes appropriated to them by custom had been suffered to be occupied. It was necessary to call the officer for the week, and the histrionic senate being assembled in consultation, the registers were inspected, and the legitimacy of the claim was acknowledged. An offer was then made to the charcoal venders to go upon the stage, and they all sat there on the King's side, upon benches prepared for them. The *poissardes* followed, and placed themselves on the opposite side.—*Note by the Editor.*

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her confinement.[1] She married Mademoiselle de Polignac, when scarcely thirteen years of age, to M. de Grammont, who, on account of this marriage, was made Duc de Guiche, and captain of the King's Guards, in reversion after the Duc de Villeroi. The Duchesse de Civrac, Madame Victoire's *dame d'honneur*, had been promised the place for the Duc de Lorges, her son. The number of discontented families at Court increased.

The title of favourite was too openly given to the Comtesse Jules by her friends. The lot of the favourite of a Queen is not, in France, a happy one; the favourites of Kings are treated, out of gallantry, with much greater indulgence.

A short time after the birth of Madame the Queen became again *enceinte;* she had mentioned it

[1] "The Duchesse de Polignac," says Montjoie, in the *Life of Marie Antoinette*, "sank under the fatigues of the life which her devotion to the Queen had imposed upon her, and which was little to her taste. Her health declined alarmingly: the physicians ordered her the Bath waters. As it was the established custom of the Court that the governess of the children of France should never be absent from them, the Duchess tendered her resignation to the Queen, who, having listened to her in silence, her eyes wet with tears, replied: 'You ought not to part from me, nor can you do it; your heart could not suffer it. In the rank I fill it is difficult to meet with a friend; and yet it is so useful—so happy—to confide in an estimable person! You do not judge me as the common herd do—you know that the splendour which surrounds me adds nothing to happiness—you are not ignorant that my soul, full of bitterness and troubles which I must conceal, feel the necessity for a heart that sympathises with them. Ought I not, then, to thank Heaven for having given me a friend like you, faithful, feeling, attached to myself and not to my rank? The benefit is inestimable! in the name of God, do not deprive me of it!'"—*Note by the Editor.*

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only to the King, to her physician, and to a few persons honoured with her intimate confidence, when having exerted her strength in pulling up one of the glasses of her carriage, she felt that she had hurt herself, and eight days afterwards she miscarried. The King spent the whole morning at her bedside, consoling her, and manifesting the tenderest concern for her. The Queen wept exceedingly; the King took her affectionately in his arms, and mingled his tears with hers. The King enjoined silence among the small number of persons who were informed of this unfortunate occurrence; and it remained generally unknown. These particulars furnish an accurate idea of the manner in which this august couple lived together.

The Empress Maria Theresa did not enjoy the happiness of seeing her daughter give an heir to the Crown of France. That illustrious Princess died at the close of 1780, after having proved by her example that, as in the instance of Queen Blanche, the talents of a sovereign might be blended with the virtues of a pious Princess. The King was deeply affected at the death of the Empress; and on the arrival of the courier from Vienna said that he could not bring himself to afflict the Queen by informing her of an event which grieved even him so much. His Majesty thought the Abbé de Vermond, who had possessed the confidence of Maria Theresa during his stay at Vienna, the most proper person to discharge this painful duty. He sent his first *valet de chambre*, M. de Chamilly, to the Abbé

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on the evening of the day he received the despatches from Vienna, to order him to come the next day to the Queen before her breakfast hour, to acquit himself discreetly of the afflicting commission with which he was charged, and to let his Majesty know the moment of his entering the Queen's chamber. It was the King's intention to be there precisely a quarter of an hour after him, and he was punctual to his time; he was announced; the Abbé came out; and his Majesty said to him, as he drew up at the door to let him pass, "*I thank you, Monsieur l'Abbé, for the service you have just done me.*" This was the only time during nineteen years that the King spoke to him.

Within an hour after learning the event the Queen put on temporary mourning, while waiting until her Court mourning should be ready; she kept herself shut up in her closets for several days; went out only to mass; saw none but the royal family; and received none but the Princesse de Lamballe and the Duchesse de Polignac. She never ceased talking of the courage, the misfortunes, the successes, and the virtues of her mother. The shroud and dress in which Maria Theresa was to be buried, made entirely by her own hands, were found ready prepared in one of her closets. The Queen found no other comfort in her affliction than talking of her beloved mother; she was thoroughly versed in the various events which distinguished the Empress' reign, and in all the qualities which rendered her dear to her family and her people. She often

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regretted that the numerous duties of her august mother had prevented her from watching in person over the education of her daughters; and modestly said that she herself would have been more worthy if she had had the good fortune to receive lessons directly from a sovereign so enlightened, and so deserving of admiration.[1]

The Queen told me one day that her mother was left a widow at an age when her beauty was yet striking; that she was secretly informed of a plot laid by her three principal ministers to make themselves agreeable to her; of a compact made between them, that the losers should not feel any jealousy towards him who should be fortunate enough to gain his sovereign's heart; and that they had sworn that the successful one should be always the friend of the other two. The Empress being assured of this scheme, one day after the breaking up of the council over which she had presided, turned the conversation upon the subject of female sovereigns, and the duties of their sex and rank; and then applying her general reflections to herself in particular, told them that she hoped to guard herself all her life against weaknesses of the heart; but that if ever an irresistible

[1] Without desiring to lessen the high estimation in which the character of Maria Theresa may be held, it cannot be denied that certain acts of her policy were censurable. The complaisance or the weakness of the other cabinets of Europe did not excuse her. "A bishop of Saint Brieuc, in a funeral oration upon Maria Theresa," says Chamfort, "got over the partition of Poland very easily: 'France,' said he, 'having taken no notice of the partition in question, I will do as France did, and be silent about it likewise.'"—*Note by the Editor.*

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feeling should make her alter her resolution, it should be only in favour of a man proof against ambition, not engaged in State affairs, but attached only to a private life and its calm enjoyments—in a word, if her heart should betray her so far as to lead her to love a man invested with any important office, from the moment he should discover her sentiments he would forfeit his place and his influence with the public. This was sufficient; the three ministers, more ambitious than amorous, gave up their projects for ever.

On the 22d of October 1781 the Queen gave birth to a Dauphin.[1] So deep a silence prevailed in the room that the Queen thought her child was a daughter; but after the Keeper of the Seals had declared the sex of the infant, the King went up to the Queen's bed, and said to her, "Madame, you have fulfilled my wishes and those of France: you are the mother of a Dauphin." The King's joy was boundless: tears streamed from his eyes; he gave his hand to every one present; and his happiness carried away his habitual reserve. Cheerful and affable, he was incessantly taking occasion to introduce the words, *my son*, or *the Dauphin*. As soon as the Queen was in bed, she would see the long-looked-for infant. The Princesse de Guéménée brought him to her. The Queen said there was no need for commending him to the Princess, but in order to enable her to attend to him more freely, she would herself share the care of the education of her

[1] The first Dauphin, Louis, born 1781, died 1789.

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daughter. When the Dauphin was settled in his apartment, he received the customary homages and visits. The Duc d'Angoulême,[1] meeting his father at the entrance of the Dauphin's apartment, said to him, "Oh, papa! how little my cousin is!" "The day will come when you will think him great enough, my dear," answered the Prince, almost involuntarily.

The birth of the Dauphin appeared to give joy to all classes. Men stopped one another in the streets, spoke without being acquainted, and those who were acquainted embraced each other. In the birth of a legitimate heir to the sovereign every man beholds a pledge of prosperity and tranquillity.[2]

The rejoicings were splendid and ingenious. The artificers and tradesmen of Paris spent considerable sums in order to go to Versailles in a body, with their various insignia. Almost every troop had music with it. When they arrived at the court of the palace, they there arranged themselves so as to present a most interesting living picture. Chimney-sweepers quite as well dressed as those that appear upon the stage, carried an ornamented chimney, at the top of

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[1] Eldest son of the Comte d'Artois, and till the birth of the Dauphin with near prospects of the succession.

[2] M. Mérard de Saint Just made a quatrain on the birth of the Dauphin to the following effect:—

"This infant Prince our hopes are centred in,
Will doubtless make us happy, rich, and free;
And since with *somebody* he must begin,
My fervent prayer is—that it may be me!"

"Le fils qui vient de naître au roi,
Fera la bonheur de la France.
Par quelqu'un il faut qu'il commence,
S'il voulait commencer par moi."

Note by the Editor.

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which was perched one of the smallest of their fraternity. The chairmen carried a sedan highly gilt, in which were to be seen a handsome nurse and a little Dauphin. The butchers made their appearance with their fat ox. Cooks, masons, blacksmiths, all trades were on the alert. The smiths hammered away upon an anvil, the shoemakers finished off a little pair of boots for the Dauphin, and the tailors a little suit of the uniform of his regiment. The King remained a long time upon a balcony to enjoy the sight. The whole Court was delighted with it. So general was the enthusiasm that (the police not having carefully examined the procession) the grave-diggers had the imprudence to send their deputation also, with the emblematic devices of their ill-omened occupation. They were met by the Princess Sophie, the King's aunt, who was thrilled with horror at the sight, and entreated the King to have the audacious fellows driven out of the procession, which was then drawing up on the terrace.

The "dames de la halle" came to congratulate the Queen, and were received with the suitable ceremonies. Fifty of them appeared dressed in black silk gowns, the established full dress of their order, and almost all wore diamonds. The Princesse de Chimay went to the door of the Queen's bedroom to receive three of these ladies, who were led up to the Queen's bed. One of them addressed her Majesty in a speech written by M. de la Harpe. It was set down on the inside of a fan, to which the speaker repeatedly referred, but without any embarrassment. She was

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handsome, and had a remarkably fine voice. The Queen was affected by the address, and answered it with great affability; wishing a distinction to be made between these women and the *poissardes*, who always left a disagreeable impression on her mind. The King ordered a substantial repast for all these women. One of his Majesty's *maîtres d'hôtel*, wearing his hat, sat as president and did the honours of the table.[1] The public were admitted, and numbers of people had the curiosity to go.

The *poissardes'* songs were numerous, and some of them tolerably good. The King and Queen were much pleased with the following one, and sang it several times during the Queen's confinement:—

"Ne craignez pas, cher papa,
D'voir augmenter vot' famille
Le bon Dieu z'y pourvoira:
Fait's-en tant qu' Versaille en fourmille
'Y eût-il cent Bourbons cheu nous,
'Y a du pain, du laurier pour tous."

The Gardes-du-Corps obtained the King's permission to give the Queen a dress ball in the great hall of the opera at Versailles. Her Majesty opened the ball in a minuet with a private selected by the corps, to whom the King granted the bâton of an exempt. The *fête* was most splendid. All then was joy, happiness, and peace.[2]

[1] Proofs of nobility, or at least of being noble in the third degree, were required for the office of *maître d'hôtel.—Madame Campan.*

[2] "The well-known antagonism between Marie Antoinette and Madame de Genlis dated," says Madame Campan, "from the birth of the Dauphin, when the Duchesse de Chartres made the

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The Dauphin was a year old when the Prince de Guéménée's bankruptcy compelled the Princess, his wife, who was governess to the Enfans de France, to resign her situation.

The Queen was at La Muette for the inoculation of her daughter. She sent for me, and condescended to say she wished to converse with me about a scheme which delighted her, but in the execution of which she foresaw some inconveniences. Her plan was to appoint the Duchesse de Polignac to the office lately held by the Princesse de Guéménée. She saw with extreme pleasure the facilities which this appointment would give her for superintending the education of her children, without running any risk of hurting the pride of the governess; and that it would bring together the objects of her warmest affections — her children and her friend. "The friends of the Duchesse de Polignac," continued the Queen, "will be gratified by the splendour and importance conferred by the employment. As to the Duchess, I know her; the place by no means

authoress' excuses for not appearing to offer her congratulations; indisposition had prevented her. The Queen replied that the Duchesse de Chartres would have caused an apology to be made in such a case; that the celebrity of Madame de Genlis might have occasioned her absence to be noticed; but that she was not of a rank to send an apology for it. This proceeding on the part of the Princess, influenced by the talents of the governess of her children, proves that at the time she still desired the regard and the friendship of the Queen; and from this moment unfavourable reflections on the habits and inclinations of the sovereign, and sharp criticisms on the works and the conduct of the female author, were continually interchanged between Marie Antoinette and Madame de Genlis."

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suits her simple and quiet habits, nor the sort of indolence of her disposition. She will give me the greatest possible proof of her devotion if she yields to my wish." The Queen also spoke of the Princesse de Chimay and the Duchesse de Duras, whom the public pointed out as fit for the post; but she thought the Princesse de Chimay's piety too rigid; and as to the Duchesse de Duras, her wit and learning quite frightened her. What the Queen dreaded as the consequence of her selection of the Duchesse de Polignac was principally the jealousy of the courtiers; but she showed so lively a desire to see her scheme executed that I had no doubt she would soon set at nought all the obstacles she discovered. I was not mistaken: a few days afterwards the Duchess was appointed governess.

The Queen's object in sending for me was no doubt to furnish me with the means of explaining the feelings which induced her to prefer a governess disposed by friendship to suffer her to enjoy all the privileges of a mother. Her Majesty knew that I saw a great deal of company.

The Queen frequently dined with the Duchess after having been present at the King's private dinner. Sixty-one thousand francs were therefore added to the salary of the governess as a compensation for this increase of expense.

The Queen was tired of the excursions to Marly, and had no great difficulty in setting the King against them. He did not like the expense of them, for everybody was entertained there *gratis*. Louis

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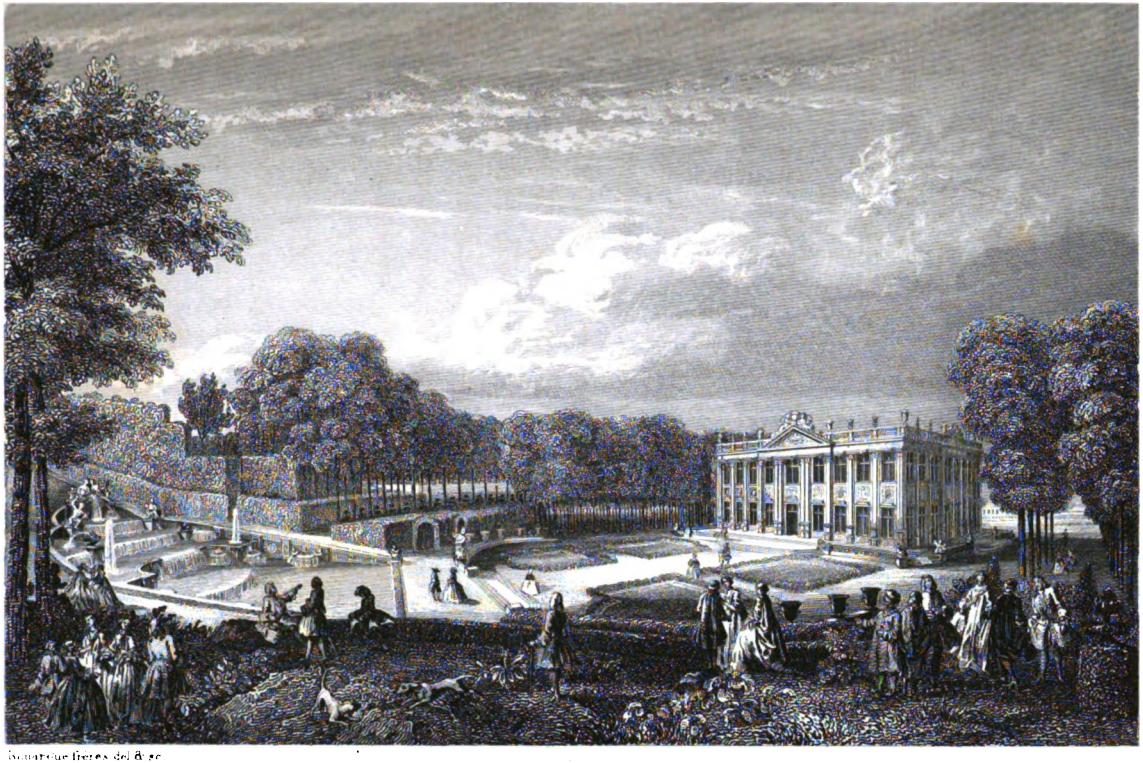

LE CHÂTEAU DE MARLY.

Paris Richard Bentley and Son 1883

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XIV. had established a kind of parade upon these excursions, differing from that of Versailles, but still more annoying. Card and supper parties occurred every day, and required much dress. On Sundays and holidays the fountains played, the people were admitted into the gardens, and there was as great a crowd as at the *fêtes* of Saint Cloud.

Every age has its peculiar colouring; Marly showed that of Louis XIV. even more than Versailles. Everything in the former place appeared to have been produced by the magic power of a fairy's wand. Not the slightest trace of all this splendour remains; the revolutionary spoilers even tore up the pipes which served to supply the fountains. Perhaps a brief description of this palace and the usages established there by Louis XIV. may be acceptable.

The very extensive gardens of Marly ascended almost imperceptibly to the pavilion of the sun, which was occupied only by the King and his family. The pavilions of the twelve zodiacal signs bounded the two sides of the lawn. They were connected by bowers impervious to the rays of the sun. The pavilions nearest to that of the sun were reserved for the Princes of the blood and the ministers; the rest were occupied by persons holding superior offices at Court, or invited to stay at Marly. Each pavilion was named after fresco paintings, which covered its walls, and which had been executed by the most celebrated artists of the age of Louis XIV. On a line with the upper pavilion there was on the

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left a chapel; on the right a pavilion called La Perspective, which concealed a long suite of offices, containing a hundred lodging-rooms intended for the persons belonging to the service of the Court, kitchens, and spacious dining-rooms, in which more than thirty tables were splendidly laid out.

During half Louis XV.'s reign the ladies still wore the *habit de cour de Marly*, so named by Louis XIV., and which differed little from that devised for Versailles. The French gown, gathered in the back, and with great hoops, replaced this dress, and continued to be worn till the end of the reign of Louis XVI. The diamonds, feathers, rouge, and embroidered stuffs, spangled with gold, effaced all trace of a rural residence; but the people loved to see the splendour of their sovereign and a brilliant Court glittering in the shades of the woods.

After dinner, and before the hour for cards, the Queen, the Princesses, and their ladies, paraded among the clumps of trees, in little carriages, beneath canopies richly embroidered with gold, drawn by men in the King's livery. The trees planted by Louis XIV. were of prodigious height, which, however, was surpassed in several of the groups by fountains of the clearest water; while, among others, cascades over white marble, the waters of which, met by the sunbeams, looked like draperies of silver gauze, formed a contrast to the solemn darkness of the groves.

In the evening nothing more was necessary for any well-dressed man to procure admission to the Queen's card-parties than to be named and pre-

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sented, by some officer of the Court, to the gentleman usher of the card-room. This room, which was very large, and of octagonal shape, rose to the top of the Italian roof, and terminated in a cupola, furnished with balconies, in which females who had not been presented easily obtained leave to place themselves, and enjoy the sight of the brilliant assemblage.

Though not of the number of persons belonging to the Court, gentlemen admitted into this *salon* might request one of the ladies seated with the Queen at lansquenet or faro to bet upon her cards with such gold or notes as they presented to her. Rich people and the gamblers of Paris did not miss one of the evenings at the Marly *salon*, and there were always considerable sums won and lost. Louis XVI. hated high play, and very often showed displeasure when the loss of large sums was mentioned. The fashion of wearing a black coat without being in mourning had not then been introduced, and the King gave a few of his *coups de boutoir* to certain Chevaliers de Saint Louis, dressed in this manner, who came to venture two or three louis, in the hope that fortune would favour the handsome duchesses who deigned to place them on their cards.[1]

[1] Bachaumont in his Memoirs (tome xii. p. 189), which are often satirical and always somewhat questionable, speaks of the singular precautions taken at play at Court. "The bankers at the Queen's table," says he, "in order to prevent the *mistakes* [I soften the harshness of his expression] which daily happen, have obtained permission from her Majesty that before beginning to play the table shall be bordered by a ribbon entirely round it, and that no other money than that upon the cards beyond the ribbon shall be considered as staked."—*Note by the Editor.*

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Singular contrasts are often seen amidst the grandeur of courts. In order to manage such high play at the Queen's faro table, it was necessary to have a banker provided with large sums of money; and this necessity placed at the table, to which none but the highest titled persons were admitted in general, not only M. de Chalabre, who was its banker, but also a retired captain of foot, who officiated as his second. A word, trivial, but completely appropriate to express the manner in which the Court was attended there, was often heard. Gentlemen presented at Court, who had not been invited to stay at Marly, came there notwithstanding as they did to Versailles, and returned again to Paris; under such circumstances, it was said such a one had been to Marly only *en polisson;*[1] and it appeared odd to hear a captivating marquis, in answer to the inquiry whether he was of the royal party at Marly, say, "No, I am only here *en polisson:*" meaning simply "I am here on the footing of all those whose nobility is of a later date than 1400." The Marly excursions were exceedingly expensive to the King. Besides the superior tables, those of the almoners, equerries, *maîtres d'hôtel*, etc. etc., were all supplied with such a degree of magnificence as to allow of inviting strangers to them; and almost all the visitors from Paris were boarded at the expense of the Court.

The personal frugality of the unfortunate Prince

[1] A contemptuous expression, meaning literally "as a scamp" or "rascal."

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who sank beneath the weight of the national debts thus favoured the Queen's predilection for her Petit Trianon; and for five or six years preceding the Revolution the Court very seldom visited Marly.

The King, always attentive to the comfort of his family, gave Mesdames, his aunts, the use of the Château de Bellevue, and afterwards purchased the Princesse de Guéménée's house, at the entrance to Paris, for Madame Elizabeth.[1] The Comtesse de Provence bought a small house at Montreuil; Monsieur already had Brunoy; the Comtesse d'Artois built Bagatelle; Versailles became, in the estimation of all the royal family, the least agreeable of residences. They only fancied themselves at home in the plainest houses, surrounded by English gardens, where they better enjoyed the beauties of nature. The taste for cascades and statues was entirely past.

The Queen occasionally remained a whole month at Petit Trianon, and had established there all the ways of life in a château. She entered the sitting-room without driving the ladies from their pianoforte or embroidery. The gentlemen continued their billiards or backgammon without suffering her presence to interrupt them. There was but little room in the small Château of Trianon. Madame Elizabeth accompanied the Queen there, but the ladies of honour and ladies of the palace had no establish-

[1] Madame Elizabeth had this house for several years; but the King arranged that she should not sleep there, until she was twenty-five years of age. The Revolution broke out before that time.—*Madame Campan.*

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ment at Trianon. When invited by the Queen, they came from Versailles to dinner. The King and Princes came regularly to sup. A white gown, a gauze kerchief, and a straw hat were the uniform dress of the Princesses.[1] Examining all the manu-

[1] The extreme simplicity of the Queen's toilette began to be strongly censured, at first among the courtiers, and afterwards throughout the kingdom; and through one of those inconsistencies more common in France than elsewhere, while the Queen was blamed, she was blindly imitated. There was not a woman but would have the same undress, the same cap, and the same feathers as she had been seen to wear. They crowded to Mademoiselle Bertin, her milliner; there was an absolute revolution in the dress of our ladies, which gave importance to that woman. Long trains, and all those fashions which confer a certain nobility on dress, were discarded; and at last a duchess could not be distinguished from an actress. The men caught the mania; the upper classes had long before given up to their lacqueys feathers, tufts of ribbon, and laced hats. They now got rid of red heels and embroidery; and walked about our streets in plain cloth, short thick shoes, and with knotty cudgels in their hands. Many humiliating scrapes were the consequence of this metamorphosis. Bearing no mark to distinguish them from the common herd, some of the lowest classes got into quarrels with them, in which the nobles had not always the superiority. . . .

The Queen showed herself as little the slave of ceremony in her choice of amusements; theatrical performances took place in her apartments; she condescended to take characters not always of the most dignified description; she also played in comic operas. This sort of amusement was, like her plainness in dress, both blamed and imitated: all classes of society imbibed a taste for theatrical representations; there was not a man of rank, a financier, nor even a citizen in easy circumstances who would be without his theatre. Formerly a private gentleman would have been disgraced if suspected of metamorphosing himself into an actor, even in a private house. The Queen having by her example put an end to this prejudice, the head of the magistracy, unmindful of the dignity of his place, performed the lowest comic parts. The Queen got through the characters she assumed indifferently enough; she could hardly be ignorant of this, as her performances evidently excited little pleasure. Indeed, one day while she was thus exhibiting, somebody ventured to say, by

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factories of the hamlet, seeing the cows milked, and fishing in the lake, delighted the Queen; and every year she showed increased aversion to the pompous excursions to Marly.

The idea of acting comedies, as was then done in almost all country houses, followed on the Queen's wish to live at Trianon without ceremony. It was agreed that no young man except the Comte d'Artois should be admitted into the company of performers, and that the audience should consist only of the King, Monsieur, and the Princesses, who did not play; but in order to stimulate the actors a little, the first boxes were to be occupied by the readers, the Queen's ladies, their sisters and daughters, making altogether about forty persons.

The Queen laughed heartily at the voice of M. d'Adhémar, formerly a very fine one, but latterly become rather tremulous. His shepherd's dress in Colin, in the *Devin du Village*, contrasted very ridiculously with his time of life, and the Queen said it

no means inaudibly, "*Well, this is royally ill played!*" The lesson was thrown away upon her, for never did she sacrifice to the opinion of another that which she thought permissible. When she was told that her extreme plainness in dress, the nature of her amusements, and her dislike to that splendour which ought always to attend a queen, had an appearance of levity, which was misinterpreted by a portion of the public, she replied with Madame de Maintenon: "I am upon the stage, and of course I shall be either hissed or applauded." Louis XIV had a similar taste; he danced upon the stage; but he had shown by brilliant actions that he knew how to enforce respect; and besides, he unhesitatingly gave up the amusement from the moment he heard those beautiful lines in which Racine pointed out how very unworthy of him such pastimes were.—*History of Marie Antoinette*, by Montjoie.

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would be difficult for malevolence itself to find anything to criticise in the choice of such a lover. The King was highly amused with these plays, and was present at every performance. Caillot, a celebrated actor, who had long quitted the stage, and Dazincourt, both of acknowledged good character, were selected to give lessons, the first in comic opera, of which the easier sorts were preferred, and the second in comedy. The office of hearer of rehearsals, prompter, and stage manager was given to my father-in-law. The Duc de Fronsac, first gentleman of the chamber, was much hurt at this. He thought himself called upon to make serious remonstrances upon the subject, and wrote to the Queen, who made him the following answer: "You cannot be first gentleman when we are the actors. Besides, I have already intimated to you my determination respecting Trianon. I hold no court there, I live like a private person, and M. Campan shall be always employed to execute orders relative to the private *fêtes* I choose to give there." This not putting a stop to the Duke's remonstrances, the King was obliged to interfere. The Duke continued obstinate, and insisted that he was entitled to manage the private amusements as much as those which were public. It became absolutely necessary to end the argument in a positive manner.

The diminutive Duc de Fronsac never failed, when he came to pay his respects to the Queen at her toilette, to turn the conversation upon Trianon, in order to make some ironical remarks on my

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father-in-law, of whom, from the time of his appointment, he always spoke as "my colleague Campan." The Queen would shrug her shoulders, and say, when he was gone, "It is quite shocking to find so little a man in the son of the Maréchal de Richelieu."

La Gageure Imprévue was one of the pieces performed at Trianon. The Queen played the part of Gotte; the Comtesse Diana that of Madame de Clainville; Madame Elizabeth the young woman, and the Comte d'Artois one of the men's characters. Colette, in the *Devin du Village*, was really very well played by the Queen. They performed also in the course of the following seasons, *Le Roi et le Fermier; Rose et Colas; le Sorcier: l'Anglais à Bourdeaux: On ne s'avise jamais de tout; le Barbier de Seville*, etc.[1]

[1] These performances, in which Marie Antoinette delighted in taking a part, have been repeatedly censured. Montjoie reproaches the Queen almost with severity, and makes observations which appear not to be quite correct. "Formerly," says he, "any private gentleman would have been disgraced upon its being known that he had turned actor, even in a family party." We will not decide whether it would have been more disgraceful in a private gentleman to act in a play, or, for instance, like the Comte de Grammont, to back with a detachment of cavalry a game of piquet, in which art had corrected fortune; but we will observe that in 1701 J. B. Rousseau's *Ceinture Magique* was played by *the Princes of the blood* before the Duchess of Burgundy.—*Memoirs of Voltaire*, Amsterdam, 1785. Voltaire gives still more minute particulars of these performances, in which *private gentlemen* would no doubt have consented to figure. "There was," says he (tome xxi. p. 157), "a small theatre erected *in the apartments of Madame de Maintenon. The Duchesse de Bourgogne*, and *the Duc d'Orleans*, with *such persons of the Court* as were most conspicuous for talent, performed there. The famous actor Baron instructed them and played with them. The majority of Duché's tragedies were composed for this theatre." We shall add but one

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So long as no strangers were admitted to these performances they were but little censured; but the praise obtained by the performers made them look for a larger circle of admirers. The Queen permitted the officers of the Body Guards and the equerries of the King and Princes to be present at the plays. Private boxes were provided for some of the people belonging to the Court; a few more ladies were invited; and claims arose on all sides for the favour of admission. The Queen refused to admit the officers of the body guards of the Princes, the officers of the King's Cent-Suisses, and many other persons, who were highly mortified at the refusal.

The company, for a private company, was good enough, and the acting was applauded to the skies; nevertheless, as the audience withdrew, adverse criticisms were occasionally heard.

While delight at having given an heir to the throne of the Bourbons, and a succession of *fêtes* and amusements filled up the happy days of Marie Antoinette, the public was engrossed by the Anglo-American war. Two Kings, or rather their ministers, planted and propagated the love of liberty in the new world; the King of England, by shutting his ears and his heart against the continued and respectful representations of subjects at a distance from

word to these positive facts, which is, that the young and amiable Marie Antoinette might well see nothing wrong in an amusement tolerated by Madame de Maintenon in the austere, hypocritical, and bigoted Court of the latter years of Louis XIV.—*Note by the Editor.*

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their native land, who had become numerous, rich, and powerful, through the resources of the soil they had fertilised; and the King of France, by giving support to this people in rebellion against their ancient sovereign. Many young soldiers, belonging to the first families of the country, followed La Fayette's example, and forsook luxury, amusement, and love to go and tender their aid to the revolted Americans. Beaumarchais, secretly seconded by Messieurs de Maurepas and de Vergennes, obtained permission to send out supplies of arms and clothing. Franklin appeared at Court in the dress of an American agriculturist. His unpowdered hair, his round hat, his brown cloth coat, formed a contrast to the laced and embroidered coats and the powder and perfume of the courtiers of Versailles. This novelty turned the light heads of the Frenchwomen. Elegant entertainments were given to Dr. Franklin, who, to the reputation of a man of science, added the patriotic virtues which invested him with the character of an apostle of liberty. I was present at one of these entertainments, when the most beautiful woman out of three hundred was selected to place a crown of laurels upon the white head of the American philosopher, and two kisses upon his cheeks. Even in the palace of Versailles, Franklin's medallion was sold under the King's eyes, in the exhibition of Sèvres porcelain. The legend of this medallion was:

"*Eripuit cælo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis.*"

The King never declared his opinion upon an

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enthusiasm which his correct judgment no doubt led him to blame. The Queen spoke out more plainly about the part France was taking respecting the independence of the American colonies, and constantly opposed it. Far was she from foreseeing that a revolution at such a distance could excite one in which a misguided populace would drag her from her palace to a death equally unjust and cruel. She only saw something ungenerous in the method which France adopted, of checking the power of England.

However, as Queen of France, she enjoyed the sight of a whole people rendering homage to the prudence, courage, and good qualities of a young Frenchman; and she shared the enthusiasm inspired by the conduct and military success of the Marquis de La Fayette. The Queen granted him several audiences on his first return from America, and, until the 10th of August, on which day my house was plundered, I preserved some lines from Gaston and Bayard, in which the friends of M. de La Fayette saw the exact outline of his character, written by her own hand:—

. . . "Why talk of youth,
When all the ripe experience of the old
Dwells with him? In his schemes profound and cool,
He acts with wise precaution, and reserves
For times of action his impetuous fire.
To guard the camp, to scale the leaguered wall,
Or dare the hottest of the fight, are toils
That suit th' impetuous bearing of his youth;
Yet like the gray-hair'd veteran he can shun
The field of peril. Still before my eyes
I place his bright example, for I love

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His lofty courage, and his prudent thought.
Gifted like him, a warrior has no age."[1]

These lines had been applauded and encored at the French theatre; everybody's head was turned. There was no class of persons that did not heartily approve of the support given openly by the French Government to the cause of American independence. The constitution planned for the new nation was digested at Paris, and while liberty, equality, and the rights of man were commented upon by the Condorcets, Baillys, Mirabeaus, etc., the minister Ségur published the King's edict, which, by repealing that of 1st November 1750, declared all officers not noble by four generations incapable of filling the rank of captain, and denied all military rank to the *roturiers*, excepting sons of the Chevaliers de Saint Louis.[2] The injustice and absurdity of this

[1] During the American war a general officer in the service of the United States advanced with a score of men under the English batteries to reconnoitre their position. His aide-de-camp, struck by a ball, fell at his side. The officers and orderly dragoons fled precipitately. The general, though under the fire of the cannon, approached the wounded man to see whether any help could be afforded him. Finding the wound had been mortal, he slowly rejoined the group which had got out of the reach of the cannon. This instance of courage and humanity took place at the battle of Monmouth. General Clinton, who commanded the English troops, knew that the Marquis de La Fayette generally rode a white horse; it was upon a white horse that the general officer who retired so slowly was mounted; Clinton desired the gunners not to fire. This noble forbearance probably saved M. de La Fayette's life, for he it was. At that time he was but twenty-two years of age.—*Historical Anecdotes of the Reign of Louis XVI.*

[2] "M. de Ségur," says Chamfort, "having published an ordinance which prohibited the admission of any other than

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law was no doubt a secondary cause of the Revolution. To understand the despair and rage with which this law inspired the *tiers-état* one should have belonged to that honourable class. The provinces were full of *roturier* families, who for ages had lived as people of property upon their own domains, and paid the taxes. If these persons had several sons, they would place one in the King's service, one in the Church, another in the Order of Malta, as a *chevalier servent d'armes*, and one in the magistracy; while the eldest preserved the paternal manor, and if he were situated in a country celebrated for wine he would, besides selling his own produce, add a kind of commission trade in the wines of the canton. I have seen an individual of this justly respected class, who had been long employed in diplomatic business, and even honoured with the title of minister plenipotentiary, the son-in-law and nephew of colonels and town mayors, and, on his mother's side, nephew of a lieutenant-general with a cordon rouge, unable to introduce his sons as sous-lieutenants into a regiment of foot.

Another decision of the Court, which could not be announced by an edict, was that all ecclesiastical benefices, from the humblest priory up to the richest

gentlemen into the artillery corps, and, on the other hand, none but well-educated persons being proper for admission, a curious scene took place: the Abbé Bossat, examiner of the pupils, gave certificates only to plebeians, while Cherin gave them only to gentlemen. Out of one hundred pupils, there were not above four or five who were qualified in both respects."

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abbey, should in future be appanages of the nobility. Being the son of a village surgeon, the Abbé de Vermond, who had great influence in the disposition of benefices, was particularly struck with the justice of this decree.

During the absence of the Abbé in an excursion he made for his health, I prevailed on the Queen to write a postscript to the petition of a curate, one of my friends, who was soliciting a priory near his curacy, with the intention of retiring to it. I obtained it for him. On the Abbé's return he told me very harshly that I should act in a manner quite contrary to the King's wishes if I again obtained such a favour; that the wealth of the Church was for the future to be invariably devoted to the support of the poorer nobility; that it was the interest of the State that it should be so; and a plebeian priest, happy in a good curacy, had only to remain curate.

Can we be astonished at the part shortly afterwards taken by the deputies of the Third Estate, when called to the States-General?

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CHAPTER X.

Visit of the Grand Duke of Russia and his Duchess to France—Entertainment and supper at Trianon—Cardinal de Rohan—Cold reception given to Comte d'Haga (Gustavus III., King of Sweden)—Peace with England—The English flock into France—Conduct to be observed at Court—Mission of the Chevalier de Bressac to the Queen—Court of Naples—Queen Caroline—The Minister Acton—Debates between the Courts of Naples and Madrid—Insolent reply of the Spanish Ambassador to Queen Caroline—Interference of France—MM. de Ségur and de Castries appointed ministers through the Queen's influence—Treachery of M. de Maurepas towards M. Necker—Appointment of M. de Calonne—Observations of Marie Antoinette.

About the close of the last century several of the Northern sovereigns took a fancy for travelling. Christian III., King of Denmark, visited the Court of France in 1763, during the reign of Louis XV. We have seen the King of Sweden and Joseph II. at Versailles. The Grand Duke of Russia (afterwards Paul I.), son of Catherine II., and the Princess of Wirtemberg, his wife, likewise resolved to visit France. They travelled under the titles of the Comte and Comtesse du Nord. They were presented on the 20th of May 1782. The Queen received them with grace and dignity. On the day of their arrival at Versailles they dined in private with the King and Queen.

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The plain unassuming appearance of Paul I. pleased Louis XVI. He spoke to him with more confidence and cheerfulness than he had done to Joseph II. The Comtesse du Nord was not at first so successful with the Queen. This lady was of a fine height, very fat for her age, with all the German stiffness, well informed, and perhaps displaying her acquirements with rather too much confidence. When the Comte and Comtesse du Nord were presented the Queen was exceedingly nervous. She withdrew into her closet before she went into the room where she was to dine with the illustrious travellers, and asked for a glass of water, confessing "she had just experienced how much more difficult it was to play the part of a Queen in the presence of other sovereigns, or of Princes born to become so, than before courtiers." She soon recovered from her confusion, and reappeared with ease and confidence. The dinner was tolerably cheerful, and the conversation very animated.

Brilliant entertainments were given at Court in honour of the King of Sweden and the Comte du Nord. They were received in private by the King and Queen, but they were treated with much more ceremony than the Emperor, and their Majesties always appeared to me to be very cautious before these personages. However, the King one day asked the Russian Grand Duke if it were true that he could not rely on the fidelity of any one of those who accompanied him. The Prince answered him without hesitation, and before a considerable

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number of persons, that he should be very sorry to have with him even a poodle that was much attached to him, because his mother would take care to have it thrown into the Seine, with a stone round its neck, before he should leave Paris. This reply, which I myself heard, horrified me, whether it depicted the disposition of Catherine, or only expressed the Prince's prejudice against her.

The Queen gave the Grand Duke a supper at Trianon, and had the gardens illuminated as they had been for the Emperor. The Cardinal de Rohan very indiscreetly ventured to introduce himself there without the Queen's knowledge. Having been treated with the utmost coolness ever since his return from Vienna, he had not dared to ask her himself for permission to see the illumination; but he persuaded the porter of Trianon to admit him as soon as the Queen should have set off for Versailles, and his Eminence engaged to remain in the porter's lodge until all the carriages should have left the château. He did not keep his word, and while the porter was busy in the discharge of his duty, the Cardinal, who wore his red stockings and had merely thrown on a greatcoat, went down into the garden, and, with an air of mystery, drew up in two different places to see the royal family and suite pass by.

Her Majesty was highly offended at this piece of boldness, and next day ordered the porter to be discharged. There was a general feeling of disgust at the Cardinal's conduct, and of commisera-

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tion towards the porter for the loss of his place. Affected at the misfortune of the father of a family. I obtained his forgiveness; and since that time I have often regretted the feeling which induced me to interfere. The notoriety of the discharge of the porter of Trianon, and the odium that circumstance would have fixed upon the Cardinal, would have made the Queen's dislike to him still more publicly known; and would probably have prevented the scandalous and notorious intrigue of the necklace.

The Queen, who was much prejudiced against the King of Sweden, received him very coldly.[1] All that was said of the private character of that sovereign, his connection with the Comte de Vergennes, from the time of the Revolution of Sweden, in 1772, the character of his favourite Armsfeld, and the prejudices of the monarch himself against the Swedes who were well received at the Court of Versailles, formed the grounds of this dislike. He came one day uninvited and unexpected, and requested to dine with the Queen. The Queen received him in the little closet, and desired me to send for her clerk of the kitchen, that she might be informed whether there was a proper dinner to set before Comte d'Haga, and add to it if necessary. The King of Sweden assured her that there would be enough for him; and I could not help smiling

[1] Gustavus III., King of Sweden, travelled in France under the title of Comte d'Haga. Upon his accession to the throne, he managed the revolution which prostrated the authority of the senate with equal skill, coolness, and courage. He was assassinated in 1792 at a masked ball by Ankarstroem.—*Note by the Editor.*

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when I thought of the length of the *menu* of the dinner of the King and Queen, not half of which would have made its appearance had they dined in private. The Queen looked significantly at me, and I withdrew. In the evening she asked me why I had seemed so astonished when she ordered me to add to her dinner; saying that I ought instantly to have seen that she was giving the King of Sweden a lesson for his presumption. I owned to her that the scene had appeared to me so much in the bourgeois style, that I involuntarily thought of the cutlets on the gridiron, and the omelette, which in families in humble circumstances serve to piece out short commons. She was highly diverted with my answer, and repeated it to the King, who also laughed heartily at it.

The peace with England satisfied all classes of society interested in the national honour. The departure of the English commissary from Dunkirk, who had been fixed at that place ever since the shameful peace of 1763 as inspector of our navy, occasioned an ecstasy of joy. The Government communicated to the Englishman the order for his departure before the treaty was made public. But for that precaution the populace would have probably committed some excess or other, in order to make the agent of English power feel the effects of the resentment which had constantly increased during his stay at that port. Those engaged in trade were the only persons dissatisfied with the treaty of 1783. That article which provided for the free admission

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of English goods, annihilated at one blow the trade of Rouen, and the other manufacturing towns throughout the kingdom. The English swarmed into Paris. A considerable number of them were presented at Court. The Queen paid them marked attention; doubtless she wished them to distinguish between the esteem she felt for their noble nation and the political views of the Government in the support it had afforded to the Americans. Discontent was, however, manifested at Court in consequence of the favour bestowed by the Queen on the English noblemen; these attentions were called infatuations. This was illiberal; and the Queen justly complained of such absurd jealousy.

The journey to Fontainebleau and the winter at Paris and at Court were extremely brilliant. The spring brought back those amusements which the Queen began to prefer to the splendour of *fêtes*. The most perfect harmony subsisted between the King and Queen; I never saw but one cloud between them. It was soon dispelled, and the cause of it is perfectly unknown to me.

My father-in-law, whose penetration and experience I respected greatly, recommended me, when he saw me placed in the service of a young Queen, to shun all kinds of confidence. "It procures," said he, "but a very fleeting, and at the same time, dangerous sort of favour; serve with zeal to the best of your judgment, but never do more than obey. Instead of setting your wits to work to discover why an order or a commission which may

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appear of consequence are given to you, use them to prevent the possibility of your knowing anything of the matter." I had occasion to act on this wise advice. One morning at Trianon I went into the Queen's chamber; there were letters lying upon the bed, and she was weeping bitterly. Her tears and sobs were occasionally interrupted by exclamations of "*Ah! that I were dead!—wretches! monsters! What have I done to them?*" I offered her orange-flower water and ether. "*Leave me,*" said she, "*if you love me: it would be better to kill me at once.*" At this moment she threw her arm over my shoulder and began weeping afresh. I saw that some weighty trouble oppressed her heart, and that she wanted a confidante. I suggested sending for the Duchesse de Polignac; this she strongly opposed. I renewed my arguments, and her opposition grew weaker. I disengaged myself from her arms, and ran to the antechamber, where I knew that an outrider always waited, ready to mount and start at a moment's warning for Versailles. I ordered him to go full speed, and tell the Duchesse de Polignac that the Queen was very uneasy, and desired to see her instantly. The Duchess always had a carriage ready. In less than ten minutes she was at the Queen's door. I was the only person there, having been forbidden to send for the other women. Madame de Polignac came in; the Queen held out her arms to her, the Duchess rushed towards her. I heard her sobs renewed and withdrew.

A quarter of an hour afterwards the Queen, who

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had become calmer, rang to be dressed. I sent her woman in; she put on her gown and retired to her boudoir with the Duchess. Very soon afterwards the Comte d'Artois arrived from Compiègne, where he had been with the King. He eagerly inquired where the Queen was; remained half an hour with her and the Duchess; and on coming out told me the Queen asked for me. I found her seated on the couch by the side of her friend; her features had resumed their usual cheerful and gracious appearance. She held out her hand to me, and said to the Duchess, "I know I have made her so uncomfortable this morning that I must set her poor heart at ease." She then added, "You must have seen, on some fine summer's day, a black cloud suddenly appear and threaten to pour down upon the country and lay it waste. The lightest wind drives it away, and the blue sky and serene weather are restored. This is just the image of what has happened to me this morning." She afterwards told me that the King would return from Compiègne after hunting there, and sup with her; that I must send for her purveyor, to select with him from his bills of fare all such dishes as the King liked best; that she would have no others served up in the evening at her table; and that this was a mark of attention that she wished the King to notice. The Duchesse de Polignac also took me by the hand, and told me how happy she was that she had been with the Queen at a moment when she stood in need of a friend. I never knew what could have created in

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the Queen so lively and so transient an alarm; but I guessed from the particular care she took respecting the King that attempts had been made to irritate him against her; that the malice of her enemies had been promptly discovered and counteracted by the King's penetration and attachment; and that the Comte d'Artois had hastened to bring her intelligence of it.

It was, I think, in the summer of 1787, during one of the Trianon excursions, that the Queen of Naples[1] sent the Chevalier de Bressac to her Majesty on a secret mission relative to a projected marriage between the Hereditary Prince, her son, and Madame, the King's daughter; in the absence of the lady of honour he addressed himself to me. Although he said a great deal to me about the close confidence with which the Queen of Naples honoured him, and about his letters of credit, I thought he had the air of an adventurer.[2] He had, indeed, private letters for the Queen, and his mission was not feigned; he talked to me very rashly even before his admission, and entreated me to do all that lay in my power to dispose the Queen's mind in favour of his sovereign's wishes; I declined, assuring him that it did not become me to meddle with State affairs. He endeavoured, but in vain, to prove to me that the union contemplated by the Queen of Naples ought not to be looked upon in that light.

[1] Caroline, sister of Marie Antoinette.

[2] He afterwards spent several years shut up in the Château de l'Œuf.—*Madame Campan.*

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I procured M. de Bressac the audience he desired, but without suffering myself even to seem acquainted with the object of his mission. The Queen told me what it was; she thought him a person ill chosen for the occasion; and yet she thought that the Queen, her sister, had done wisely in not sending a man worthy to be avowed; it being impossible that what she solicited should take place. I had an opportunity on this occasion, as indeed on many others, of judging to what extent the Queen valued and loved France and the dignity of our Court. She then told me that Madame,[1] in marrying her cousin, the Duc d'Angoulême, would not lose her rank as daughter of the Queen; and that her situation would be far preferable to that of Queen of any other country; that there was nothing in Europe to be compared to the Court of France; and that it would be necessary, in order to avoid exposing a French Princess to feelings of deep regret, in case she should be married to a foreign Prince, to take her from the palace of Versailles at seven years of age, and send her immediately to the Court in which she was to dwell; and that at twelve would be too late; for recollections and comparisons would ruin the happiness of all the rest of her life. The Queen looked upon the destiny of her sisters as far beneath her own; and frequently mentioned the mortifications inflicted by the Court of

[1] The Princess Marie Thérèse Charlotte, daughter of Louis XVI., who married her cousin, the Duc d'Angoulême, son of the Comte d'Artois, in 1799.

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Spain upon her sister, the Queen of Naples; and the necessity she was under of imploring the mediation of the King of France.

She showed me several letters that she had received from the Queen of Naples relative to her differences with the Court of Madrid respecting the Minister Acton. She thought him useful to her people, inasmuch as he was a man of considerable information and great activity. In these letters she minutely acquainted her Majesty with the nature of the affronts she had received, and represented Mr. Acton to her as a man whom malevolence itself could not suppose capable of interesting her otherwise than by his services. She had had to suffer the impertinences of a Spaniard named Las Casas, who had been sent to her by the King, her father-in-law, to persuade her to dismiss Mr. Acton from the business of the State, and from her intimacy. She complained bitterly to the Queen, her sister, of the insulting proceedings of this *chargé d'affaires*, whom she told, in order to convince him of the nature of the feelings which attached her to Mr. Acton, that she would have portraits and busts of him executed by the most eminent artists of Italy, and that she would then send them to the King of Spain, to prove that nothing but the desire to retain a man of superior capacity had induced her to bestow on him the favour he enjoyed. This Las Casas dared to answer her, that it would be useless trouble; that the ugliness of a man did not always render him displeasing; and that the King of Spain

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had too much experience not to know that there was no accounting for the caprices of a woman.

This audacious reply filled the Queen of Naples with indignation, and her emotion caused her to miscarry on the same day. In consequence of the mediation of Louis XVI. the Queen of Naples obtained complete satisfaction, and Mr. Acton continued Prime Minister.

Among the characteristics which denoted the goodness of the Queen, her respect for personal liberty should have a place. I have seen her put up with the most troublesome importunities from people whose minds were deranged rather than have them arrested. Her patient kindness was put to a very disagreeable trial by an ex-councillor of the Bordeaux Parliament, named Castelnaux; this man declared himself the lover of the Queen, and was generally known by that appellation. For ten successive years did he follow the Court in all its excursions. Pale and wan, as people who are out of their senses usually are, his sinister appearance occasioned the most uncomfortable sensations. During the two hours that the Queen's public card-parties lasted, he would remain opposite her Majesty. He placed himself in the same manner before her at chapel, and never failed to be at the King's dinner or the dinner in public. At the theatre he invariably seated himself as near the Queen's box as possible. He always set off for Fontainebleau or Saint Cloud the day before the Court, and when her Majesty arrived at her various

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residences, the first person she met on getting out of her carriage was this melancholy madman, who never spoke to any one. When the Queen stayed at Petit Trianon the passion of this unhappy man became still more annoying. He would hastily swallow a morsel at some eating-house, and spend all the rest of the day, even when it rained, in going round and round the garden, always walking at the edge of the moat. The Queen frequently met him when she was either alone or with her children; and yet she would not suffer any violence to be used to relieve her from this intolerable annoyance. Having one day given M. de Sèze permission to enter Trianon, she sent to desire he would come to me, and directed me to inform that celebrated advocate of M. de Castelnaux's derangement, and then to send for him that M. de Sèze might have some conversation with him. He talked to him nearly an hour, and made considerable impression upon his mind; and at last M. de Castelnaux requested me to inform the Queen positively that, since his presence was disagreeable to her, he would retire to his province. The Queen was very much rejoiced, and desired me to express her full satisfaction to M. de Sèze. Half an hour after M. de Sèze was gone the unhappy madman was announced. He came to tell me that he withdrew his promise, that he had not sufficient command of himself to give up seeing the Queen as often as possible. This new determination was a disagreeable message to take to her Majesty; but how was

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I affected at hearing her say, "Well, let him annoy me! but let him not be deprived of the blessing of freedom."[1]

The direct influence of the Queen on affairs during the earlier years of the reign was only shown in her exertions to obtain from the King a revision of the decrees in two celebrated causes. It was contrary to her principles to interfere in matters of justice, and never did she avail herself of her influence to bias the tribunals. The Duchesse de Praslin, through a criminal caprice, carried her enmity to her husband so far as to disinherit her children in favour of the family of M. de Guéménée. The Duchesse de Choiseul, who was warmly interested in this affair, one day entreated the Queen, in my presence, at least to condescend to ask the first president when the cause would be called on; the Queen replied that she could not even do that, for it would manifest an interest which it was her duty not to show.

If the King had not inspired the Queen with a lively feeling of love, it is quite certain that she yielded him respect and affection for the goodness of his disposition and the equity of which he gave so many proofs throughout his reign. One evening she returned very late; she came out of the

[1] On the arrest of the King and Queen at Varennes, this unfortunate Castelnaux attempted to starve himself to death. The people in whose house he lived, becoming uneasy at his absence, had the door of his room forced open, when he was found stretched senseless on the floor. I do not know what became of him after the 10th of August.—*Madame Campan.*

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King's closet, and said to M. de Misery and myself, drying her eyes, which were filled with tears, "You see me weeping, but do not be uneasy at it: these are the sweetest tears that a wife can shed; they are caused by the impression which the justice and goodness of the King have made upon me; he has just complied with my request for a revision of the proceedings against Messieurs de Bellegarde and de Monthieu, victims of the Duc d'Aiguillon's hatred to the Duc de Choiseul. He has been equally just to the Duc de Guines in his affair with Tort. It is a happy thing for a Queen to be able to admire and esteem him who has admitted her to a participation of his throne; and as to you, I congratulate you upon your having to live under the sceptre of so virtuous a sovereign."

The Queen laid before the King all the memorials of the Duc de Guines, who, during his embassy to England, was involved in difficulties by a secretary, who speculated in the public funds in London on his own account, but in such a manner as to throw a suspicion of it on the ambassador. Messieurs de Vergennes and Turgot, bearing but little good will to the Duc de Guines, who was the friend of the Duc de Choiseul, were not disposed to render the ambassador any service. The Queen succeeded in fixing the King's particular attention on this affair, and the innocence of the Duc de Guines triumphed through the equity of Louis XVI.

An incessant underhand war was carried on between the friends and partisans of M. de Choiseul,

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who were called the Austrians, and those who sided with Messieurs d'Aiguillon, de Maurepas, and de Vergennes, who, for the same reason, kept up the intrigues carried on at Court and in Paris against the Queen. Marie Antoinette, on her part, supported those who had suffered in this political quarrel, and it was this feeling which led her to ask for a revision of the proceedings against Messieurs de Bellegarde and de Monthieu. The first, a colonel and inspector of artillery, and the second, proprietor of a foundry at Saint Étienne, were, under the ministry of the Duc d'Aiguillon, condemned to imprisonment for twenty years and a day for having withdrawn from the arsenals of France, by order of the Duc de Choiseul, a vast number of muskets, as being of no value except as old iron, while in point of fact the greater part of those muskets were immediately embarked and sold to the Americans. It appears that the Duc de Choiseul imparted to the Queen, as grounds of defence for the accused, the political views which led him to authorise that reduction and sale in the manner in which it had been executed. It rendered the case of Messieurs de Bellegarde and de Monthieu more unfavourable that the artillery officer who made the reduction in the capacity of inspector was, through a clandestine marriage, brother-in-law of the owner of the foundry, the purchaser of the rejected arms. The innocence of the two prisoners was nevertheless made apparent; and they came to Versailles with their wives and

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children to throw themselves at the feet of their benefactress. This affecting scene took place in the grand gallery, at the entrance to the Queen's apartment. She wished to restrain the women from kneeling, saying that *they had only had justice done them; and that she ought to be congratulated upon the most substantial happiness attendant upon her station, that of laying just appeals before the King.*[1]

On every occasion, when the Queen had to speak in public, she used the most appropriate and elegant language, notwithstanding the difficulty a foreigner might be expected to experience. She answered all addresses herself, a custom which she learned at the Court of Maria Theresa. The Princesses of the House of Bourbon had long ceased to take the trouble of speaking in such cases. Madame Adelaide blamed the Queen for not doing as they did, assuring her that it was quite sufficient to mutter a few words that might sound like an answer, while the addressers, occupied with what they had themselves been saying, would always take it for granted that a proper answer had been returned. The Queen saw that idleness alone dictated such a proceeding, and that as the practice even of muttering a few words showed the necessity

[1] There is a contemporary engraving which represents this scene of gratitude and kindness tolerably well, reproducing accurately places, costumes, and the likenesses of the principal personages. Among the latter we recognise M. the Comte de Provence (his Majesty Louis XVIII.), Madame the Comtesse de Provence, M. the Comte and Madame the Comtesse d'Artois, and the Emperor Joseph II.—*Note by the Editor.*

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of answering in some way, it must be more proper to reply simply but clearly, and in the best style possible. Sometimes indeed, when apprised of the subject of the address, she would write down her answer in the morning, not to learn it by heart, but in order to settle the ideas or sentiments she wished to introduce.

The influence of the Comtesse de Polignac increased daily; and her friends availed themselves of it to effect changes in the ministry. The dismissal of M. de Montbarrey, a man without talents or character, was generally approved of. It was rightly attributed to the Queen. He had been placed in administration by M. de Maurepas, and maintained by his aged wife; both, of course, became more inveterate than ever against the Queen and the Polignac circle.

The appointment of M. de Ségur to the place of Minister of War, and of M. de Castries to that of Minister of Marine, were wholly the work of that circle. The Queen dreaded making ministers; her favourite often wept when the men of her circle compelled her to interfere. Men blame women for meddling in business, and yet in courts it is continually the men themselves who make use of the influence of the women in matters with which the latter ought to have nothing to do.

When M. de Ségur was presented to the Queen on his new appointment, she said to me, "You have just seen a minister of my making. I am very glad, so far as regards the King's service, that he is appointed, for I think the selection a very good one;

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but I almost regret the part I have taken in it. I take a responsibility upon myself. I was fortunate in being free from any; and in order to relieve myself from this as much as possible I have just promised M. de Ségur, and that upon my word of honour, not to back any petition, nor to hinder any of his operations by solicitations on behalf of my *protégés*."

During the first administration of M. Necker, whose ambition had not then drawn him into schemes repugnant to his better judgment, and whose views appeared to the Queen to be very judicious, she indulged in hopes of the restoration of the finances. Knowing that M. de Maurepas wished to drive M. Necker to resign, she urged him to have patience until the death of an old man whom the King kept about him from a fondness for his first choice, and out of respect for his advanced age. She even went so far as to tell him that M. de Maurepas was always ill, and that his end could not be very distant. M. Necker would not wait for that event. The Queen's prediction was fulfilled. M. de Maurepas ended his days immediately after a journey to Fontainebleau in 1781.[1]

M. Necker had retired. He had been exasperated by a piece of treachery in the old minister, for which he could not forgive him. I knew something

[1] Louis XVI. deeply regretted Maurepas. During his last illness he went himself to inform him of the birth of the Dauphin, *to announce it to his friend and rejoice with him;* these were his very expressions. The day after his funeral he said, with an air of great affliction, "Ah! I shall no longer hear my friend overhead every morning."—*Biographie Universelle.*

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of this intrigue at the time; it has since been fully explained to me by Madame la Maréchale de Beauvau. M. Necker saw that his credit at Court was declining, and fearing lest that circumstance should injure his financial operations, he requested the King to grant him some favour which might show the public that he had not lost the confidence of his sovereign. He concluded his letter by pointing out five requests—such an office, *or* such a mark of distinction, *or* such a badge of honour, and so on, and handed it to M. de Maurepas. The *ors* were changed into *ands;* and the King was displeased at M. Necker's ambition, and the assurance with which he displayed it.

Madame la Maréchale de Beauvau assured me that the Maréchal de Castries saw the minute of M. Necker's letter, and that he likewise saw the altered copy.

The interest which the Queen took in M. Necker died away during his retirement, and at last changed into strong prejudice against him. He wrote too much about the measures he would have pursued, and the benefits that would have resulted to the State from them. The ministers who succeeded him thought their operations embarrassed by the care that M. Necker and his partisans incessantly took to occupy the public with his plans; his friends were too ardent. The Queen discerned a party spirit in these combinations, and sided wholly with his enemies.

After those inefficient comptrollers-general,

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Messieurs Joly de Fleury and d'Ormesson, it became necessary to resort to a man of more acknowledged talent, and the Queen's friends, at that time combining with the Comte d'Artois and with M. de Vergennes, got M. de Calonne appointed. The Queen was highly displeased, and her close intimacy with the Duchesse de Polignac began to suffer for this. It was at this period she said that when sovereigns chose favourites they raised powers about them which, being flattered at first for their masters' sake, were afterwards flattered for their own; formed a party in the State, acted alone, and caused the odium of their actions to fall upon the sovereigns to whom they owed their influence.

The inconveniences attendant on the private life of a sovereign then struck the Queen in all their bearings. She talked to me about them in confidence, and often told me that I was the only person aware of the vexations that her social habits brought upon her; but that she must bear the anxieties of which she herself was the sole author: that the appearance of fickleness in a friendship such as that which she had contracted with the Duchess, or a total rupture, could only produce fresh calamities. It was not that she had to reproach Madame de Polignac with a single fault which could make her regret the choice she had made of her for a friend, but she had not foreseen the inconvenience of having to support the friends of our friends, which society obliges one to do.

Her Majesty, continuing to converse with me

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upon the difficulties she had met with in private life, told me that ambitious men without merit sometimes found means to gain their ends by dint of importunity, and that she had to blame herself for having procured M. d'Adhémar's appointment to the London Embassy, merely because he teased her into it at the Duchess' house. She added, however, that it was at a time of perfect peace with the English; that the minister knew the inefficiency of M. d'Adhémar as well as she did, and that he could do neither harm nor good.

Often in conversations of unreserved frankness the Queen owned that she had purchased rather dearly a piece of experience which would make her carefully watch over the conduct of her daughters-in-law; and that she would be particularly scrupulous about the qualifications of the ladies who might attend them; that no consideration of rank or favour should bias her in so important a choice. She attributed several of her youthful mistakes to a lady of great levity, whom she found in her palace on her arrival in France. She also determined to forbid the Princesses coming under her control the practice of singing with professors, and said candidly, and with as much severity as her slanderers could have done, "I ought to have heard Garat sing, and never to have sung duets with him."

The indiscreet zeal of Monsieur Augeard contributed to the public belief that the Queen disposed of all the offices of finance. He had, without any authority for doing so, required the committee of

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fermiers-général to inform him of all vacancies, assuring them that they would be meeting the wishes of the Queen. The members complied, but not without murmuring. When the Queen became aware of what her secretary had done, she highly disapproved of it, caused her resentment to be made known to the *fermiers-général*, and abstained from asking for appointments; only making one request of the kind as a marriage portion for one of her attendants, a young woman of good family.

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CHAPTER XI.

The Queen is dissatisfied with the appointment of M. de Calonne—Acts of benevolence—Purchase of Saint Cloud—Regulations of internal police—State of France—Beaumarchais—*Marriage of Figaro*—Character of M. de Vaudreuil.

THE Queen did not sufficiently conceal the dissatisfaction she felt at having been unable to prevent the appointment of M. de Calonne; she even one day went so far as to say at the Duchess', in the midst of the partisans and protectors of that minister, that the finances of France passed alternately from the hands of an honest man without talent into those of a skilful knave. M. de Calonne was thus far from acting in concert with the Queen all the time that he continued in office; and, while dull verses were circulated about Paris describing the Queen and her favourite dipping at pleasure into the coffers of the comptroller-general, the Queen was avoiding all communication with him.

During the long and severe winter of 1783-4 the King gave three millions of livres for the relief of the indigent. M. de Calonne, who felt the necessity of making advances to the Queen, caught at this opportunity of showing her respect and devotion. He offered to place in her hands one million of the

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three, to be distributed in her name and under her direction. His proposal was rejected: the Queen answered that the charity ought to be wholly distributed in the King's name, and that she would this year debar herself of even the slightest enjoyments, in order to contribute all her savings to the relief of the unfortunate.

The moment M. de Calonne left the closet the Queen sent for me: "Congratulate me, my dear," said she; "I have just escaped a snare, or at least a matter which eventually might have caused me much regret." She related the conversation which had taken place word for word to me, adding, "That man will complete the ruin of the national finances. It is said that I placed him in his situation. The people are made to believe that I am extravagant; yet I have refused to suffer a sum of money from the royal treasury, although destined for the most laudable purpose, even to pass through my hands."

The Queen making monthly retrenchments from the expenditure of her privy purse, and not having spent the gifts customary at the period of her confinement, was in possession of from five to six hundred thousand francs, her own savings. She made use of from two to three hundred thousand francs of this, which her first women sent to M. Lenoir, to the curés of Paris and Versailles, and to the *Sœurs Hospitalières*, and so distributed them among families in need.

Desirous to implant in the breast of her daughter not only a desire to succour the unfortunate but those qualities necessary for the due discharge of

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that duty, the Queen incessantly talked to her, though she was yet very young, about the sufferings of the poor during a season so inclement. The Princess already had a sum of from eight to ten thousand francs for charitable purposes, and the Queen made her distribute part of it herself.

Wishing to give her children yet another lesson of beneficence, she desired me on New Year's eve to get from Paris, as in other years, all the fashionable playthings, and have them spread out in her closet. Then taking her children by the hand she showed them all the dolls and mechanical toys which were ranged there, and told them that she had intended to give them some handsome New Year's gifts, but that the cold made the poor so wretched that all her money was spent in blankets and clothes to protect them from the rigour of the season, and in supplying them with bread; so that this year they would only have the pleasure of looking at the new playthings. When she returned with her children into her sitting-room, she said there was still an unavoidable expense to be incurred; that assuredly many mothers would at that season think as she did; that the toyman must lose by it; and therefore she gave him fifty louis to repay him for the cost of his journey, and console him for having sold nothing.

The purchase of Saint Cloud, a matter very simple in itself, had, on account of the prevailing spirit, unfavourable consequences to the Queen.

The Palace of Versailles, pulled to pieces in the interior by a variety of new arrangements, and muti-

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lated in point of uniformity by the removal of the ambassadors' staircase, and of the peristyle of columns placed at the end of the marble court, was equally in want of substantial and ornamental repair. The King therefore desired M. Micque to lay before him several plans for the repairs of the Palace. He consulted me on certain arrangements analogous to some of those adopted in the Queen's establishment, and in my presence asked M. Micque how much money would be wanted for the execution of the whole work, and how many years he would be in completing it. I forget how many millions were mentioned: M. Micque replied that six years would be sufficient time if the Treasury made the necessary periodical advances without any delay. "And how many years shall you require," said the King, "if the advances are not punctually made?" —"Ten, Sire," replied the architect. "We must then reckon upon ten years," said his Majesty, "and put off this great undertaking until the year 1790; *it will occupy the rest of the century.*" The King afterwards talked of the depreciation of property which took place at Versailles, whilst the Regent removed the Court of Louis XV. to the Tuileries, and said that he must consider how to prevent that inconvenience: it was the desire to do this that promoted the purchase of Saint Cloud. The Queen first thought of it one day when she was riding out with the Duchesse de Polignac and the Comtesse Diana; she mentioned it to the King, who was much pleased with the thought; the purchase

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confirming him in the intention, which he had entertained for ten years, of quitting Versailles.

The King determined that the ministers, public officers, pages, and a considerable part of his stabling should remain at Versailles. Messieurs de Breteuil and de Calonne were instructed to treat with the Duc d'Orléans for the purchase of Saint Cloud; at first they hoped to be able to conclude the business by a mere exchange. The value of the Château de Choisy, de La Muette, and a forest, was equivalent to the sum demanded by the House of Orleans; and in the exchange which the Queen expected she only saw a saving to be made instead of an increase of expense. By this arrangement the government of Choisy, in the hands of the Duc de Coigny, and that of La Muette, in the hands of the Maréchal de Soubise, would be suppressed. At the same time the two *concierges*, and all the servants employed in these two royal houses, would be reduced; but while the treaty was going forward Messieurs de Breteuil and de Calonne gave up the point of exchange, and some millions in cash were substituted for Choisy and La Muette.

The Queen advised the King to give her Saint Cloud, as a means of avoiding the establishment of a governor; her plan being to have merely a *concierge* there, by which means the governor's expenses would be saved. The King agreed, and Saint Cloud was purchased for the Queen. She provided the same liveries for the porters at the gates and servants at the château as for those at

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Trianon. The *concierge* at the latter place had put up some regulations for the household, headed: "*By order of the Queen.*" The same thing was done at Saint Cloud. The Queen's livery at the door of a palace where it was expected none but that of the King would be seen, and the words, "By order of the Queen," at the head of the printed papers pasted near the iron gates, caused a great sensation, and produced a very unfortunate effect, not only among the common people but also among persons of a superior class. They saw in it an attack upon the customs of monarchy, and customs are nearly equal to laws. The Queen heard of this, but she thought that her dignity would be compromised if she made any change in the form of these regulations, though they might have been altogether superseded without inconvenience. "My name is not out of place," said she, "in gardens belonging to myself; I may give orders there without infringing on the rights of the State." This was her only answer to the representations which a few faithful servants ventured to make on the subject. The discontent of the Parisians on this occasion probably induced M. d'Esprémenil, upon the first troubles about the Parliament, to say that it was *impolitic* and *immoral* to see palaces belonging to a Queen of France.[1]

[1] The Queen never forgot this affront of M. d'Esprémenil's; she said that as it was offered at a time when social order had not yet been disturbed, she had felt the severest mortification at it. Shortly before the downfall of the throne M. d'Esprémenil, having openly espoused the King's side, was insulted in the

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The Queen was very much dissatisfied with the manner in which M. de Calonne had managed this matter. The Abbé de Vermond, the most active and persevering of that minister's enemies, saw with delight that the expedients of those from whom alone new resources might be expected were gradually becoming exhausted, because the period when the Archbishop of Toulouse would be placed over the finances was thereby hastened.

The royal navy had resumed an imposing attitude during the war for the independence of America; a glorious peace with England had compensated for the former attacks of our enemies upon the fame of France; and the throne was surrounded by numerous heirs. The sole ground of uneasiness was in the finances, but that uneasiness related only to the manner in which they were administered. In a word, France felt confident in its own strength and resources, when two events, which seem scarcely worthy of a place in history, but which have nevertheless an important one in that of the French Revolution, introduced a spirit of ridicule and contempt, not only against the highest ranks, but even against the most august personages. I allude to a comedy and a great swindling transaction.

gardens of the Tuileries by the Jacobins, and so ill-treated that he was carried home very ill. Somebody recommended the Queen, on account of the royalist principles he then professed, to send and inquire for him. She replied that she was truly grieved at what had happened to M. d'Esprémenil, but that mere policy should never induce her to show any particular solicitude about the man who had been the first to make so insulting an attack upon her character.—*Madame Campan.*

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Beaumarchais had long possessed a reputation in certain circles in Paris for his wit and musical talents, and at the theatres for dramas more or less indifferent, when his *Barber of Seville* procured him a higher position among dramatic writers. His memoirs against M. Goësman had amused Paris by the ridicule they threw upon a parliament which was disliked; and his admission to an intimacy with M. de Maurepas procured him a degree of influence over important affairs. He then became ambitious of influencing public opinion by a kind of drama, in which established manners and customs should be held up to popular derision and the ridicule of the new philosophers. After several years of prosperity the minds of the French had become more generally critical; and when Beaumarchais had finished his monstrous but diverting *Marriage of Figaro* all people of any consequence were eager for the gratification of hearing it read, the censors having decided that it should not be performed. These readings of *Figaro* grew so numerous that people were daily heard to say, "I have been (or I am going to be) at the reading of Beaumarchais' play." The desire to see it performed became universal: an expression that he had the art to use compelled, as it were, the approbation of the nobility, or of persons in power, who aimed at ranking among the magnanimous; he made his *Figaro* say that "*none but little minds dreaded little books.*" The Baron de Breteuil, and all the men of Madame de Polignac's circle, entered the lists as the warmest

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BEAUMARCHAIS.

Paris : Richard Bentley and Son 1883

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protectors of the comedy. Solicitations to the King became so pressing that his Majesty determined to judge for himself of a work which so much engrossed public attention, and desired me to ask M. Le Noir, lieutenant of police, for the manuscript of the *Marriage of Figaro*. One morning I received a note from the Queen ordering me to be with her at three o'clock, and not to come without having dined, for she should detain me some time. When I got to the Queen's inner closet I found her alone with the King; a chair and a small table were ready placed opposite to them, and upon the table lay an enormous manuscript in several books. The King said to me, "There is Beaumarchais' comedy; you must read it to us. You will find several parts troublesome on account of the erasures and references. I have already run it over, but I wish the Queen to be acquainted with the work. You will not mention this reading to any one."

I began. The King frequently interrupted me by praise or censure, which was always just. He frequently exclaimed, "That's in bad taste; this man continually brings the Italian concetti on the stage." At that soliloquy of Figaro in which he attacks various points of government, and especially at the tirade against State prisons, the King rose up and said indignantly, "That's detestable; that shall never be played; the Bastille must be destroyed before the licence to act this play can be any other than an act of the most dangerous inconsistency.

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This man scoffs at everything that should be respected in a government." "It will not be played, then?" said the Queen. "No, certainly," replied Louis XVI.; "you may rely upon that."

Still it was constantly reported that *Figaro* was about to be performed; there were even wagers laid upon the subject; I never should have laid any myself, fancying that I was better informed as to the probability than anybody else; if I had, however, I should have been completely deceived. The protectors of Beaumarchais, feeling certain that they would succeed in their scheme of making his work public in spite of the King's prohibition, distributed the parts in the *Marriage of Figaro* among the actors of the Théâtre Français. Beaumarchais had made them enter into the spirit of his characters, and they determined to enjoy at least one performance of this so-called *chef d'œuvre.* The first gentleman of the chamber agreed that M. de la Ferté should lend the theatre of the Hôtel des Menus Plaisirs, at Paris, which was used for rehearsals of the opera; tickets were distributed to a vast number of leaders of society; and the day for the performance was fixed. The King heard of all this only on the very morning, and signed a *lettre de cachet*,[1] which prohibited the performance. When the messenger who brought the order arrived, he found a part of the theatre already filled with spectators, and the

[1] A *lettre de cachet* was any written order proceeding from the King. The term was not confined merely to orders for arrest. —*Madame Campan.*

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streets leading to the Hôtel des Menus Plaisirs filled with carriages; the piece was not performed. This prohibition of the King's was looked upon as an attack on public liberty.

The disappointment produced such discontent that the words *oppression* and *tyranny* were uttered with no less passion and bitterness at that time than during the days which immediately preceded the downfall of the throne. Beaumarchais was so far put off his guard by rage as to exclaim, "Well! gentlemen, he won't suffer it to be played here; but I swear it shall be played—perhaps in the very choir of Notre Dame!" There was something prophetic in these words.[1] It was generally insinuated shortly afterwards that Beaumarchais had determined to suppress all those parts of his work which could be obnoxious to Government; and on pretence of judging of the sacrifices made by the author, M. de Vaudreuil obtained permission to have this far-famed *Marriage of Figaro* performed at his country house. M. Campan was asked there; he had frequently heard the work read, and did not now find the alterations that had been announced; this he observed to several persons belonging to the Court, who maintained that the author had made all the sacrifices required. M. Campan was so astonished at these persistent assertions of an obvious falsehood that he replied by a quotation from Beaumarchais

[1] The Keeper of the Seals had constantly opposed the performance of this play. The King said in his presence one day, "You will see that Beaumarchais will have more weight than the Keeper of the Seals."—*Note by the Editor.*

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himself, and assuming the tone of Basilio in the *Barber of Seville*, he said, "Faith, gentlemen, I don't know who is deceived here; everybody is in the secret." They then came to the point, and begged him to tell the Queen positively that all which had been pronounced reprehensible in M. de Beaumarchais' play had been cut out. My father-in-law contented himself with replying that his situation at Court would not allow of his giving an opinion unless the Queen should first speak of the piece to him. The Queen said nothing to him about the matter. Shortly afterwards permission to perform this play was at length obtained. The Queen thought the people of Paris would be finely tricked when they saw merely an ill-conceived piece, devoid of interest, as it must appear when deprived of its satire.[1]

[1] "The King," says Grimm, "made sure that the public would judge unfavourably of the work. He said to the Marquis de Montesquiou, who was going to see the first representation, 'Well, what do you augur of its success?' 'Sire, I hope the piece will fail.' 'And so do I,' replied the King."

"There is something still more ridiculous than my piece," said Beaumarchais himself; "that is, its success." Mademoiselle Arnould foresaw it the first day, and exclaimed, "It is a production that will fail fifty nights successively." There was as crowded an audience on the seventy-second night as on the first. The following is extracted from Grimm's *Correspondence*:—

"*Answer of M. de Beaumarchais to the Duc de Villequier, who requested the use of his private box for some ladies who wished to see 'Figaro,' without being seen.*

"I have no respect, M. le Duc, for women who indulge themselves in seeing any play which they think indecorous, provided they can do so in secret. I lend myself to no such fancies. I have given my piece to the public, to amuse, and not to instruct, not to give any compounding prudes the pleasure of going to admire it in a private box, and balancing their account with conscience by censuring it in company. To indulge in the pleasure

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Under the persuasion that there was not a passage left capable of malicious or dangerous application, Monsieur attended the first performance in a public box. The mad enthusiasm of the public in favour of the piece and Monsieur's just displeasure are well known. The author was sent to prison soon afterwards, though his work was extolled to the skies, and though the Court durst not suspend its performance.

The Queen testified her displeasure against all who had assisted the author of the *Marriage of Figaro* to deceive the King into giving his consent that it should be represented. Her reproaches were more particularly directed against M. de Vaudreuil for having had it performed at his house. The

of vice and assume the credit of virtue is the hypocrisy of the age. My piece is not of a doubtful nature; it must be patronised in good earnest, or avoided altogether; therefore, with all respect to you, M. le Duc, I shall keep my box." This letter was circulated all over Paris for a week. At first it was said to be addressed to the Duc de Villequier, and afterwards to the Duc d'Aumont. It got in this form as far as Versailles, where it was pronounced an extraordinary piece of impertinence. It seemed the more insolent inasmuch as it was well known that certain very great ladies had declared that if they did go to see the *Marriage of Figaro*, it should be only in a private box. The most zealous partisans of M. de Beaumarchais did not dare even to attempt to vindicate him. After having enjoyed this new flash of celebrity owing either to his own consideration or to the threats of his enemies M. de Beaumarchais was compelled to announce publicly that his famous letter never was written to a duke or peer, but to one of his own friends, and that upon the first spur of dissatisfaction. It was proved that the letter was written to a president of one of the parliaments, whereupon indignation subsided; for that which appeared impertinent when addressed to men of the Court, was deemed so no longer when addressed to one of the long robe."—*Note by the Editor.*

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violent and domineering disposition of her favourite's friend at last became disagreeable to her.

One evening on the Queen's return from the Duchess's, she desired her *valet de chambre* to bring her billiard cue into her closet, and ordered me to open the box that contained it. I was surprised at not finding the padlock belonging to it, the key of which the Queen wore on her watch chain. I opened the box and took out the cue, broken in two. It was of ivory and formed of one single elephant's tooth; the butt was of gold and very tastefully wrought. "There," said she, "that is the way M. de Vaudreuil has treated a thing I valued so highly. I had laid it upon the couch while I was talking to the Duchess in the *salon;* he had the assurance to make use of it, and in a fit of passion about a blocked ball, he struck the cue so violently against the table that he broke it in two. The noise brought me back into the billiard room; I did not say a word to him, but my looks showed him how angry I was. He is the more provoked at the accident, as he already aspires to the post of Governor to the Dauphin, and with that object in view it is not wise to display passion. I never thought of him for the place. It is quite enough to have consulted my heart only in the choice of a governess; and I will not suffer that of a Governor to the Dauphin to be at all affected by the influence of my friends. I should be responsible for it to the nation. The poor man does not know that my determination is taken; for I have never expressed it to the

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Duchess. Therefore, judge of the sort of evening he must have passed! This is not the first occurrence that has shown me that if Queens are bored in their own circle, they are compromised in the circles of others."

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APPENDIX.

Contemporary Reminiscences of Marie Antoinette.

THE following extracts from the correspondence of the Comte de la Marck with the Comte de Mirabeau will possess interest as containing the views of one fully conversant with the affairs of the period :—

"The influence which the Queen is said to have exercised in directing the King's choice of his ministers is altogether imaginary ; I have it in my power to prove that this charge also was quite without foundation, except in one instance, which I have before mentioned, when she exerted herself on behalf of the Marquis de Ségur. Far from desiring to mix herself up in State affairs, she manifested a strong distaste to anything like important business ; in this respect, perhaps, she only exhibits what is natural to the character of a woman's mind. I have not the slightest hesitation, therefore, in declaring that all that has been said on this subject is utterly false, as well concerning the part which the Abbé de Vermond is stated to have taken with regard to the relations of France with Austria, as in the cases which I have already enumerated, and which were of little importance.

"I here take the opportunity of mentioning some facts in support of my opinion, and shall begin with one which first suggests itself to my memory, though it occurred after others which I shall subsequently relate. When M.

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Necker was dismissed from office the first time, I happened to be at Brussels, as well as the Emperor Joseph; I saw him almost every day, and he seemed to take pleasure in conversing with me about France and the Queen; it was from him that I heard of M. Necker's dismissal, for he had just received the news in a letter from his sister. He spoke in the warmest terms of this Minister, and of the talents with which he considered him endowed, and seriously blamed the King for dismissing him. He remarked, 'that the Queen was also very much vexed at this step; *she wrote to me*,' he added, '*to assure me that she had nothing to do with this change of Ministry*.' But I must proceed to mention some other facts.

"At the death of Louis XV. the Court of Vienna was very anxious that the Duc de Choiseul should be placed at the head of the new King's Ministry. He had ever shown himself the most zealous upholder of the Treaty of 1756, that is to say, of the close alliance between France and Austria. The most explicit and urgent instructions were therefore despatched to the Comte de Mercy on the subject, and he readily found an instrument for his purpose in the Abbé de Vermond, who was devoted to M. de Choiseul; for, as I have previously observed, he was partly indebted to him for the post he had obtained at Vienna. The Choiseul party, which was exceedingly numerous, did not either remain inactive; its members lost no opportunity in endeavouring to interest the Queen in M. de Choiseul's nomination to the Ministry. They even went so far as to say that it was to them she owed the successful issue of the negotiation for her marriage, as if the Archduchess was not at that period the most fitting match for the Dauphin, and as if there had been a better choice left for him! But M. de Choiseul and his party were not very scrupulous about the means they employed; they sought only to turn everything they could to their own advantage.

"After the death of his grandfather Louis XVI. consulted Mesdames his aunts about the person whom he

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should place at the head of the Ministry, and it was in consequence of their advice that he fixed upon M. de Maurepas, though he was at first undecided whether he should select him or M. de Machault.

"The young Queen was pleased at the respect which the King had shown for Mesdames' advice. At a later period, however, when she found herself surrounded by those who strove to get M. de Choiseul created minister, she began to share their desire that he might be elected. There is little doubt but that she spoke to the King on the subject, but she discovered immediately on broaching it that Louis XVI. entertained the most decided aversion to M. de Choiseul, which may be accounted for by the great dislike which his father, the dauphin, even till his death, experienced towards this minister. But this I know for certain, as I learnt it from the Comte de Mercy, but a few months after the death of Louis XV., the Queen expressed herself very clearly with regard to the reception with which her petition in M. de Choiseul's favour had met, and declared that she had resolved never to speak to the King again on the subject.

"M. de Maurepas, who did not desire to have M. de Choiseul associated with himself in the Ministry, was accused at the time of strengthening the King's dislike to him. But however the case stood, M. de Maurepas was getting very old, so that the Choiseul party did not give up its ultimate aim, and only awaited the death of the minister to renew all its former intrigues. When this event happened, however, all manœuvres were useless, for the Queen resolutely refused to move in the matter, and the Abbé de Vermond, who was well acquainted with her sentiments, warned M. de Mercy that it would be impossible to make her alter her determination. The ambassador, accordingly, placed this view of the case before the Court of Vienna, and induced it to relinquish all hopes of M. de Choiseul being raised to the Ministry. Meanwhile another ambitious and intriguing person was working silently, yet actively, in order that he might one day, by

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the influence of the Court of Vienna, and through the medium of the Abbé de Vermond, be placed at the head of the Ministry,—this was M. de Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse. He humoured and managed the Abbé with great judgment. It was by his (the Abbé's) means that he had broached the subject to the Comte de Mercy, and that he had succeeded in persuading him that were he once minister he would firmly uphold the Treaty of 1756. The ambassador did not omit to inform the Court of Vienna of this circumstance, who from that time seriously entertained the project of raising M. de Brienne to the Ministry through the influence of the Queen. But as long as M. de Maurepas lived they kept their scheme secret; the great age of the minister gave birth to the same feelings in the minds of its authors, as in those of the Choiseul camp. They resolved to wait patiently; they contented themselves with enumerating to the Queen the various merits of the Archbishop; they represented him to her as a man endowed with great intelligence, with a strong and comprehensive mind, and as likely one day to make a first-rate minister.

"The Comte de Mercy sometimes spoke to her on this subject, and he found himself warmly seconded by the Abbé de Vermond, who, being deluded by his attachment to the Archbishop, really considered him the greatest man in France. The Queen, whose mental vision was somewhat blinded by these subtle insinuations, began at length to form a high opinion of M. de Brienne.

"On the death of M. de Maurepas these intrigues and M. de Mercy's support caused the Archbishop to entertain great hopes of success, but this time they were soon overthrown; the King bestowed his confidence at once on M. de Vergennes, a man who was a perfect stranger to those persons who habitually surrounded the Queen. As soon as Marie Antoinette became acquainted with the King's choice, she not only gave up all thoughts of endeavouring to change his resolution, but she also immediately relinquished the idea of further exerting her

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influence in M. de Brienne's cause, in whose favour it must be confessed she had previously spoken to the King on several occasions. Even the answer which the King made her on this point I can positively state; he replied as follows, 'that it would not do to make an archbishop or a bishop, minister, for as soon as they had attained this position they would be eagerly looking forward to the cardinal's hat, and when once this dignity had been bestowed on them they would put forth pretensions to precedence and importance in council which would inevitably lead to their being created Prime Minister; and for this very reason he would not have M. de Brienne in the Ministry, as he did not intend to have a Prime Minister.'

"When this reply came to M. de Mercy's and the Abbé de Vermond's ears it vexed them exceedingly, but they did not attempt to challenge it. They still, every now and then, used fresh exertions, but they could never succeed in inducing the Queen to speak to the King on the subject, though she still maintained her good opinion of M. de Brienne. He in fact at a later period did attain his end, but owing to circumstances which had nothing whatever to do with the Queen, and which I shall here relate.

"In 1787 M. de Calonne, then Minister of Finance, had persuaded the King to convoke an assembly of the Notables. This measure had been arranged with the greatest secrecy between the King, the Comte de Vergennes, M. de Calonne, and the Keeper of the Seals, M. de Miromênil. The Queen was not even informed of it by the King until a few days after the letters of convocation were issued, which is yet another proof of how little she mixed herself up in political questions, and that at this time the King certainly did not consult her with regard to State affairs, for which I again declare she had very little taste. If at a later period she interfered in them, it was rather, as I shall afterwards show, as the King's *confidante*, and in circumstances so serious that she was only too well justified in mixing herself up in them.

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"The Notables were scarcely assembled when the frivolity, the thoughtlessness, and the inconsistency of M. de Calonne's proceedings, and above all the death of M. de Vergennes, placed the King in the most embarrassing situation. He found himself compelled, on account of the general feeling of animosity which was displayed towards M. de Calonne, to dismiss him; but being deprived of the able advice of M. de Vergennes, he scarcely knew to whom to apply to assist him in his choice of a successor to M. de Calonne.

"And now intrigue went forward with greater activity than ever. One party was eager that M. Necker should be Minister of Finance, and another the Archbishop of Toulouse. Meanwhile, till a fitting person could be fixed upon, the post was given to M. de Fourqueux, and M. de Lamoignon was made Keeper of the Seals.

"In all these proceedings, however, the Queen took no share. But the rival parties of MM. de Brienne and Necker were still on the stage, and employed themselves in negotiating with each other. Madame la Maréchale de Beauvau, a great friend of Necker's, was the most active person in endeavouring to bring about a reconciliation between the two aspirants. She held also close relations with the Archbishop, therefore she persuaded him to unite his exertions to those of M. Necker's friends, with the view of their both being raised to the Ministry.

"As Louis XVI.'s dislike to M. Necker was well known, it was agreed that the Archbishop should be first appointed minister, and when he was once installed in this position that M. Necker should be chosen to the like office.

"While these intrigues were going forward the Archbishop, who did not hesitate to make promises which cost him little, in order that he might obtain the power which he desired, bound himself that M. Necker should be placed at the head of the financial department three months after he (M. de Brienne) had been created minister.

"These two parties completely beset the King, who

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at last began to be deceived by these reiterated addresses in their favour, and who at length thought that the election of M. de Brienne was generally desired by the public. He determined to fix upon him, therefore, and it was only after he had come to this decision that he spoke to the Queen on the subject. She answered, '*I have always heard M. de Brienne mentioned as a man of distinguished merit; and I confess it gives me pleasure to learn that he is about to form part of the Ministry.*' The Archbishop was elected head of the *conseil des finances*, which was left vacant by the death of the Comte de Vergennes, but far from keeping the promise which he had given to M. Necker, he did all he could to injure him in the King's opinion. M. de Villedeuil consequently took M. de Fourqueux's place as superintendent of the financial department, and M. Necker's hopes, therefore, were for the present overthrown.

"Everybody is well acquainted with the manner in which M. de Brienne conducted himself during the short time he remained in the Ministry. His utter incapacity rendered it absolutely impossible for the King to retain him in office, so that Louis XVI. found himself once more plunged into fresh difficulties and uncertainty as to the person who should fill his place. On all sides he was again told that public opinion was universally in favour of M. Necker. The poor King, therefore, only imagined that he was yielding to the general wish in endeavouring to overcome his personal dislike to M. Necker, and in electing him. He fancied that M. Necker might be disinclined to accept the office on account of his being aware of the King's antipathy to him, and when he remembered the discussions they had together at the time he was first in office: the King, however, took the best means to remove any unpleasant feeling. He sent to the Comte de Mercy and begged him to come to the Queen. On his arriving the King explained to him the awkward position in which he was placed, and asked him to act as intermediary between himself (the King) and M. Necker. M.

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de Mercy, who thoroughly understood M. Necker's character, hastened to remove all doubts from the King's mind, but he refused at first to undertake the mission that was confided to him. The King, however, insisted on his executing it, consequently he was obliged to accede to his request. Accordingly he set out for Saint Ouen in order to sound M. Necker. His conjectures were quite correct; he met with few obstacles, and after a few vague remarks as to the state of public affairs, and the necessity of the King's not opposing his views, M. Necker accepted the office, and did not attempt to disguise the satisfaction he felt at the cause of M. de Mercy's visit.

"The circumstances which I have just related are known only to a few persons, but I can vouch for the truth of all I have stated, and I trust that in mentioning these facts I shall have completely vindicated the Queen from the reproach of having meddled with the internal politics of the country, as I have previously endeavoured to do with regard to foreign affairs. What the Queen eagerly strove for, and felt pleasure in obtaining, was some place or other for those persons whom she liked, or who sought her protection; but her wishes were chiefly confined to the object of procuring some post in diplomacy, or in a regiment, or some few advantages at Court for her friends. If the minister to whom she applied on such occasions assured her that in bestowing the place on her *protégé* he should be guilty of injustice to somebody else who possessed more merit and more claims to it, she never pursued the matter. If errors of this kind were committed, it is not the Queen who ought to be blamed, for she only imagined she was doing a good action in soliciting a position for her friend; but those servile ministers who were only too eager to please the Queen, who did not refuse to grant her desire, and did not represent the true state of the case to her, to which she would certainly have listened. Under what rule, however, has not favouritism triumphed over merit? When a King or Queen has not bestowed protection and favours on an

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object who has little deserved them, has not a minister perhaps, or his wife, or mistress, or even an agent, or some one in a still lower degree?

"On looking back to the time of which I am speaking, and in reflecting what the position of a Queen of France was at that period, ought she not to be viewed with impartial indulgence, when she is known to have solicited offices for her friends, or for those whom she deemed worthy of the favours they asked for themselves? But in fact, the *coryphées* of the Polignac society often found that the Queen refused their demands, consequently they coaxed and flattered the Comte d'Artois much more than herself, because he lent himself much more willingly to assist them in their plans.

"I cannot resist mentioning another fact, which will serve to prove that the King knew how to set limits to the influence which the Queen was supposed to exercise, on occasions when it was necessary to elect somebody to an important post.

"The place of *grand mâitre des postes et relais* had been left vacant ever since Louis XV. had deprived the Duc de Choiseul of it, at the time of this minister's disgrace and exile. M. d'Ogny, a magistrate of great integrity and worth, fulfilled its duties, but he was invested with a subordinate rank. This post, which was very lucrative, was also one of great importance, as it concerned the opening of letters, this being one of its duties. In fact, it has been declared that this opening of letters served to feed the King's curiosity with regard to private matters in families, and that it furnished him with a kind of chronicle of scandal. But I am quite certain that when Louis XVI. came to the throne this particular portion of the police's surveillance was abolished, except as far as the interests of the kingdom and of public tranquillity were concerned; yet this still left the place one of great confidential importance. When the family of the Polignacs had reached the height of the King's and Queen's favour, the Duchesse de Polignac entreated the

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Queen to procure the *grande maîtrise des postes* for her husband. Marie Antoinette made several attempts to interest the King in the Duc de Polignac's favour, but did not succeed in gaining her point; still she was continually importuned by the Duchess, and therefore she was ever seeking to change the King's determination. At length Louis XVI. had the weakness to yield, and promised that the place should be bestowed on the Duc de Polignac; nevertheless he did not fulfil his word till several weeks afterwards, and then, unable to resist any longer the frequent solicitations which were made to him on the subject, he suddenly created the Duc de Polignac *grand maître des relais de France*, but did not invest him with that portion of the office which concerned the letters which arrived by post. The Polignacs, who were very disappointed and discontented at the division of the duties of this position, urged the Queen to speak again to the King on this head, in order that everything might go on as it did during the time of the Duc de Choiseul, but in this instance Louis XVI. would not allow his resolution to be shaken. He observed to the Queen that the business of opening letters was too important to be confided to anybody who lived in the great world, that this particular duty ought to be left in the hands of that person who had already proved himself to possess sufficient tact and discretion, to avoid all the embarrassments of so delicate an office. The Queen, who was thoroughly convinced of the justice of the King's remarks, declared to the discontented Polignacs that she would not permit the subject to be further discussed.

"M. and Madame de Polignac were not always careful to assemble about them those persons whom the Queen liked to meet, and she was often pained when she noticed this circumstance. The Comte de Mercy, who was well aware of this peculiarity in the society of the Polignacs, joined it as seldom as possible, and only visited them occasionally, to prevent his absence from being too much remarked.

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"The Comte de Fersen, influenced by the Queen, declined to frequent their circle, though they had made all kinds of advances to induce him to do so. At length, four years before the Revolution—that is to say, in 1785—things had come to such a point that the Queen, previously to visiting Madame de Polignac, always sent one of her *valets de chambre* to inquire the names of those persons whom she should find in her society, and very frequently on learning them she gave up the idea of joining it. She had taken a profound dislike to M. de Calonne, and had begun to entertain the same feeling towards M. de Vaudreuil, whose imperious and exacting disposition had extremely displeased her. M. de Calonne, however, took great pains to get into her good graces; he seemed to guess her least wish and to know beforehand what she was going to ask. It was this superfluity of attention on his part, I think, which disgusted the Queen with him; at any rate, she seemed scarcely to endure it with patience. He was very anxious to be of some importance in the Polignac's society, in order that he might obtain the Queen's favour and support. Consequently he had formed an intimacy with the Duc de Vaudreuil, and lent a willing ear to this man's incessant demands for money, so that when M. de Calonne left the Ministry, bills of 800,000 francs, which Vaudreuil owed him, were found in his possession. Upon one occasion the Queen ventured to express to Madame de Polignac the dislike she felt for many persons whom she found in her society. Madame de Polignac, who was quite submissive to those who ruled her, did not hesitate, in spite of her habitual easiness and sweet temper, to say to the Queen, '*I do not think, because your Majesty does me the honour to visit my salon, that you have a right to exclude my friends from it.*' The Queen herself related this circumstance to me in 1790, and she remarked, '*I do not lay blame on Madame de Polignac for this answer, for she is in the main a good creature, and loves me, but the people who surround her completely manage her.*'

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"As the Queen discovered that no advantage was likely to accrue to her from joining the society of Madame de Polignac, she gradually withdrew from her *salon*, and soon fell into the habit of going frequently and unceremoniously to the Comtesse d'Ossun, who was her lady-in-waiting, and whose apartments were close to those of her Majesty. Marie Antoinette would take dinner with her, accompanied by four or five other persons; she would get up little concerts, at which she would sing herself; in short, she seemed to be much more at ease, and was much more full of gaiety, than she ever appeared to be at Madame de Polignac's.

"The Comtesse d'Ossun was neither very striking nor gifted with fascinating manners, nor was she remarkably intelligent; but the want of these endowments was amply compensated for by a good heart and sweet disposition, and she was a most estimable woman. She was devoted, heart and soul, to the Queen, and was the last person in the world to mix herself up in intrigue of any kind; she did not strive to gain the Queen's favour, she was only anxious that the Queen should be amused when in her society, and that she should be pleased with her. Her fortune was exceedingly small, and would not, without serious embarrassment, permit her to receive the Queen often at dinner, nor to give *soirées* in her honour, upon which occasions there was always a ball or concert, so she frankly explained this circumstance to her Majesty, and begged that expenses of this kind might be defrayed from the King's funds. Marie Antoinette preferred offering to give entertainments, in order that she might not lose anything by these royal visits. Many people in Madame d'Ossun's place would have taken advantage of such a proposal, and would have asked more than was necessary to cover the expense of the Queen's visit, but she did not act in this manner, and only begged that she might receive six thousand livres monthly, which was a very moderate request, for the Queen was frequently in the habit of going to her

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when she felt her conscience easy about the cost to which she was putting her lady-in-waiting; the result was, that Madame d'Ossun spent much more than she received.

"The preference which the Queen showed to Madame d'Ossun was naturally displeasing to the Polignac society; it placed the latter, too, in a peculiarly delicate position, for she was connected with them by marriage; her brother, the Duc de Guiche, afterwards Duc de Grammont, had married the daughter of the Duchesse de Polignac, and it was in consequence of this match that he had the reversion of the company of the *gardes du corps* conferred on him, which at this time was under the command of the Duc de Villeroi. Madame d'Ossun conducted herself with great propriety in this awkward dilemma; she was particularly careful to avoid saying anything which might be likely to injure the Polignacs in the Queen's opinion; she was very reserved on this point, and only exerted herself to please the Queen, without harming anybody else, and without, be it said to her honour, taking advantage of the Queen's partiality to her in order to obtain favours for herself, her family, or her friends.

"How very different was the conduct of the Polignacs! They seemed to find pleasure in giving vent to the most angry feelings against the Queen. Some of these might be natural, but there are others which can scarcely be understood,—namely, that they should have carried their ill-temper to such a pitch as to spread the most atrocious reports about her. They spoke maliciously of the Queen's delight in dancing *Écossaises* with young Lord Strathaven at the little balls which were given at Madame d'Ossun's. A frequenter of the Polignac *salon*, who ought, on the contrary, to have been moved by profound respect and gratitude to the Queen, wrote some very slanderous verses against her; these verses, which were founded on a most infamous falsehood, were destined to be circulated in Paris.

"It is painful to remark that the unfortunate Marie

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Antoinette met with some very dangerous enemies among those who ought to have been her most faithful, devoted, and grateful followers. They were the more dangerous because it was they who caused the vile calumny to be propagated which alighted so cruelly upon this poor Princess' head at the outbreak of the French Revolution. From these wicked and false reports, which were spread by the Court in 1785 and 1788, the revolutionary tribunal found pretexts for the accusations they brought against Marie Antoinette in 1793."

These observations of the Comte de la Marck with regard to the Queen give us, I think, a very truthful and precise idea of the character of this Princess, and of the life she led before the French Revolution.

The author of these sketches possesses at least the merit of being thoroughly informed, as to all that he relates, of having known most of the persons whom he brings on the stage, and of having judged them with impartiality and without bitter feeling, for it must be remarked that he had no reason to view them otherwise. His position at Court raised him above those petty and absorbing jealousies which at this period were continually creating disputes for Court favours or influence.

Private Diary of Louis XVI.

Without holding ourselves responsible for its authenticity, we are tempted to reproduce here some passages from what is alleged to have been the private memoranda of the King brought to light by an accidental discovery about forty years after the assassination of the unhappy monarch.

M. Alby gives the following account of this discovery. After a graphic description of the innumerable shops and stalls for old books in several quarters of

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Paris, particularly along the Quais, and in the oldest parts of the *Cité*, the multitudes of which are so surprising to strangers, and furnish such inexhaustible food to book-collectors, he says:

"At the corner of the Rue du Marché-aux-Fleurs and the Rue Gervais-Laurent, one of these old book-shops attracts the eyes of the book-hunter. About five years ago a friend of mine, strolling one day along the Quai aux Fleurs, happened to go into this shop. The shopkeeper the day before had bought several hundreds weight of old paper at a private sale, and my friend set about exploring their contents. After a long search, which produced nothing of any consequence, he was about to give it up, when he came upon a number of paper books, the appearance and preservation of which excited his curiosity. He began to examine them, and was not a little surprised to find a regular journal, drawn up year by year, month by month, day by day, the contents of which, apparently, could relate only to Louis XVI. He bought the manuscripts, and when he went home compared the handwriting with autographs of this sovereign. His satisfaction may be imagined when he ascertained that these papers, of which chance had made him the possessor, were all written by the hand of Louis XVI., and that he had in his custody a most precious manuscript, the perusal of which must necessarily afford curious information respecting the habits, tastes, and dispositions of a Prince whose tragical fate has not yet silenced his enemies, or expiated the faults laid to his charge—faults which should be ascribed to a state of social organisation antiquated and worn out by his predecessors. The question occurred to my friend, how these memoirs had found their way into this old book-shop; and his inquiries afforded an answer. When the populace, in 1792, broke open and ransacked the iron cabinets in which papers were kept in the Palace of the Tuileries, several members of the Convention took possession of the papers which were carried off. These

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memoirs fell into the hands of a member of the Convention, who kept them concealed during his life. His family, ignorant of their value and importance, got rid of them at his death as useless rubbish, no doubt, and they found their way into the hands of the old book-vendor."

M. Alby goes on to say that, on hearing of this adventure, he entreated his friend to give him a perusal of these manuscripts; but his friend had already shown them to more *prudent* people, by whom he had permitted them to be torn up (*lacérés*). M. Alby, however, was able to make notes and extracts from them, which he has given to the world through the medium of a newspaper entitled *La Presse*. By presenting to our readers a few of these passages, and exhibiting them in connection with the passing occurrences and circumstances in which Louis was placed at the moments when he wrote them, we may afford some curious glimpses of his character.

The diary began on the 1st of January 1766 (when Louis was yet Dauphin), and was continued down to the 31st of July 1792, only ten days before the fatal 10th of August, which consummated his fall.

In phrenological language, he seems to have possessed in a very remarkable degree the organ of *order*. He put down his petty receipts and disbursements with extreme minuteness, and the smallest mistake in his entries annoyed him excessively. Many instances are mentioned of his exactness in regard to accounts and figures. One day in particular (we are told by Soulavie) an account was laid before him by one of the ministers, in which there appeared among the disbursements an item which had been inserted in the preceding year's account. "There is a double charge here," said the King; "bring me last year's account, and I will show it you there."

The King thus begins his diary for the year 1779:—

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"I have in my cash-box on 1st January—

	liv.	s.	d.
42 rouleaus of 1200 livres .	50,400	0	0
In my purse . . .	549	0	0
17 24-sous pieces . .	20	8	0
46 12-sous pieces . .	27	12	0
99 6-sous pieces . .	29	14	0
88 2-sous pieces . .	8	16	0
136 6-farthing pieces . .	10	4	0
	51,045	14	0"

The following are some of his disbursements :—

"*July* 1772.—A watch-glass, 12 sous.

"*August.*—To Testard, for postage of a letter, 6 sous.

"*September.*—To L'Epinay, for a wash-hand basin, 6 sous.

"*January* 1773.—For a quire of paper, 4 sous.

"*February*—For cotton, 6 sous.

"*May.*—To L'Epinay for disbursement, 4 sous 3 deniers."

Many of these entries are important in themselves, or interesting from their simplicity. For example :—

"*27th December* 1776.—Gave the Queen 25,000 livres."

And he adds in a note :—

"These 25,000 livres are the first payment of a sum of 300,000 livres which I have engaged to pay to Bœhmer in six years, with interest, for the earrings bought by the Queen for 348,000 livres, and of which she has already paid 48,000 livres."

Bœhmer was the Court jeweller ; the same person who afterwards furnished the celebrated "diamond necklace," which gave rise to so much scandal, and for a time so deeply involved the Queen's character. Under the date of 18th February 1777 there is a further entry on the same subject as the preceding :—

"Paid the Queen, on account of the 162,660 livres which she owes Bœhmer for diamond bracelets, 24,000 livres."

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There are various entries of gratuities given to courtiers and men of letters :—

"15*th January* 1775.—Paid M. de Sartine [the chief of the police] 12,000 livres for a part of the expenses incurred by Beaumarchais in stopping the circulation of an improper book.

"1*st April* 1775.—Paid M. de Sartine for Beaumarchais, 18,000 livres."

The celebrated author of *Figaro*, by the way, notwithstanding the bitterness of his political satires, and the ultra-liberalism of his sentiments, was for many years a regular and well-paid *employé* of the Court during the reigns of both Louis XV. and Louis XVI.

Prince Esterhazy is put down annually for a sum of 15,000 livres, which the Queen was charged with paying him. He held some employment, we may presume, in the household of the Austrian Princess ; but a salary of five or six hundred a year sounds odd to a member of a family whose revenues are equal to those of many a sovereign.

M. de Cubières, Court poet, had an allowance of 6000 livres a year ; and M. de Pezay, another Court poet, had 12,000 livres. These sums were paid through M. de Maurepas, the minister, or M. de Sartine.

Louis summed up his gains and losses at play, and entered them at the end of every month :—

"*October* 1779.—Lost at play 59,394 livres.

"*March* 1780.—My partners have lost at Marly, at lansquenet, 36,000 livres.

"*February* 1781.—Lost at play 15 livres."

He was much given to the weakness—a common one in his day—of trying his fortune in the lottery. We find such entries as the following :—

"28*th December* 1777.—To M. Necker for lottery tickets, 6000 livres.

"2*d January* 1783.—Gained in the lottery 990 livres.

"10*th* (same month).—Gained in the lottery 225 livres."

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He was equally minute in recording the employment of his time as of his money. At the end of every year he drew up a general summary of the manner in which his days had been spent. The following is his *recapitulation* for the year 1775 :—

	Days when I was out.
"Stag-hunting—	
Saint Germain	15
Versailles	17
The 'Grands Environs'	9
Alluerts and Besnet	7
Rambouillet	14
(I missed two hunts there)	
Saint Geneviève	1
Fontainebleau	9—72
Boar-hunting—	
Saint Germain	4
Alluerts	1
Compiègne	2
Fontainebleau	7—14
Roebuck-hunting	27
Harriers—	
Compiègne	2
Fontainebleau	2— 4
Shooting	58
Journeys without hunting—	
Going to Compiègne	1
to Fismes	1
to Rheims	1
Returning from Compiègne	1
from Versailles	1
Going to and returning from Choisy	2
Going to Fontainebleau	1
Returning from Fontainebleau	1
To Saint Denis, where dined	2—11
Reviews	3
Total	189
Hunting dinners	8
Dinners and suppers at Saint Hubert	26"

He was careful, too, to mark down every month the quantity of game he killed, and summed up the whole at the end of the year. It thus appears that in the month

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of December 1775 he killed 1564 head of game, and the total for the whole year amounted to 8424.

"The only passion ever shown by Louis XVI.," says Soulavie, "was for hunting. He was so much occupied by it that when I went up to his private apartments at Versailles, after the 10th of August, I saw upon the staircase six frames in which there were statements of all his hunting-parties both when Dauphin and when King. They contained the number, kind, and quality of the game he had killed every time he went out, with recapitulations for every month, every season, and every year of his reign."

It is obvious that these statements, which the King seems to have had so much pleasure in making up and displaying, must have been drawn from the entries in his diary.

The following is *the whole* of Louis's diary for the eventful month of July 1789:—

"*Wednesday* 1.—Nothing. Deputation of the States.

"*Thursday*, 2.—Got on horseback at the Porte du Main, for a stag-hunt at Port-Royal. One taken.

"*Friday*, 3.—Nothing.

"*Saturday*, 4.—Hunted the roebuck at Butart. One taken and twenty-nine killed.

"*Sunday*, 5.—Vespers.

"*Monday*, 6.—Nothing.

"*Tuesday*, 7.—Stag-hunt at Port-Royal. Two taken.

"*Wednesday*, 8.—Nothing.

"*Thursday*, 9.—Nothing. Deputation of the States.

"*Friday*, 10.—Nothing. Answer to the deputation of the States.

"*Saturday*, 11.—Nothing. Departure of M. Necker.

"*Sunday*, 12.—Vespers. Departure of Mess. Montmorenci, Saint Priest, and La Lucerne.

"*Monday*, 13.—Nothing.

"*Tuesday*, 14.—Nothing.

"*Wednesday*, 15.—At a meeting in the hall of the States, and returned on foot.

"*Thursday*, 16.—Nothing.

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"*Friday*, 17.—Went to Paris, to the Hôtel de Ville.

"*Saturday*, 18.—Nothing.

"*Sunday*, 19.—Vespers. Return of Messieurs Montmorenci and Saint Priest.

"*Monday*, 20.—Airing on horseback, and shooting in the Little Park. Killed two.

"*Tuesday*, 21.—Nothing. Return of M. de Lucerne. Stag-hunt at Butart. Cardinal Montmorenci's audience.

"*Wednesday*, 22.—Nothing.

"*Thursday*, 23.—Nothing.

"*Friday*, 24.—Airing on horseback, and shooting at Butart. Killed thirteen.

"*Saturday*, 25.—Nothing.

"*Sunday*, 26.—Vespers.

"*Monday*, 27.—Nothing. Stag-hunt at Marly.

"*Tuesday*, 28.—Nothing. Prevented from going out by bad weather.

"*Wednesday*, 29.—Return of M. Necker.

"*Thursday*, 30.—Nothing.

"*Friday*, 31.—Kept within doors by rain."

It was in this month of July 1789 in which we find such "an infinite deal of *nothing*," that the Revolution actually commenced. The terrible day of the *fourteenth*, when the Bastille was stormed by the populace, and the heads of its governor and some of its defenders, paraded on pikes through the streets of Paris, is merely noticed by the word "*Rien*," and in the momentous and agitating scenes which occupied the following days Louis quietly records his stag-hunts and shooting-matches at Butart and the Little Park, and the quantity of game he killed! Was this the depth of insensibility or the height of philosophy?

The following is the diary for the whole of another memorable month—*June* 1791 :—

"*Wednesday*, 1.—Nothing.

"*Thursday*, 2.—Vespers.

"*Friday*, 3.—Nothing.

"*Saturday*, 4.—Nothing.

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" *Sunday*, 5. Vespers.

" *Monday*, 6.—Nothing.

" *Tuesday*, 7.—Airing on horseback, at half-past seven, by Grenelle, Sèvres, and Saint Cloud.

" *Wednesday*, 8.—Nothing.

" *Thursday*, 9,—Nothing.

" *Friday*, 10.—Nothing.

" *Saturday*, 11.—Airing on horseback at nine o'clock, by Mesnilmontant and Noisy-le-sec. There were no early vespers for want of orders.

" *Sunday*, 12.—There have not been the regular ceremonies. High mass and vespers. Grand couvert.

" *Monday*, 13.—Vespers.

" *Tuesday*, 14.—Vespers.

" *Wednesday*, 15.—Airing on horseback at half-past nine, all round the new enclosure.

" *Thursday*, 16.—Nothing.

" *Friday*, 17.—Nothing.

" *Saturday*, 18.—On horseback at half-past nine to the Bois de Boulogne.

" *Sunday*, 19.—Vespers.

" *Monday*, 20.—Nothing.

" *Tuesday*, 21.—Left Paris at midnight. Arrived and arrested at Varennes-en-Argonne, at eleven o'clock at night.

" *Wednesday*, 22.—Left Varennes at five or six in the morning. Breakfasted at Saint Menehould. Arrived at ten in the evening at Chalons. Supped and slept.

" *Thursday*, 23.—At half-past eleven mass interrupted to urge our setting off. Breakfasted at Chalons. Dined at Epernay. Met the Commissioners of the Assembly. Arrived at eleven o'clock at Dormans. Supped there. Slept three hours in an armchair.

" *Friday*, 24.—Left Dormans at half-past seven. Dined at Ferté-sous-Jouarre. Arrived at ten o'clock at Meaux. Supped and slept at the Bishop's residence.

" *Saturday*, 25.—Left Meaux at half-past six. Arrived at Paris at eight, without stopping.

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" *Sunday*, 26.—Nothing at all. Mass in the gallery. Conference with the Commissioners of the Assembly.

" *Monday*, 27.—Idem.

" *Tuesday*, 28.—Idem. Took whey.

" *Wednesday*, 29.—Idem.

" *Thursday*, 30.—Idem."

The whole of the following month (July 1791) is comprised in a bracket, opposite the middle of which is written, " *Nothing the whole month. Mass in the gallery.*" Some of the days, however, have special notes. The following are remarkable :—

" *Thursday*, 14.—Was to have taken medicine.

" *Sunday*, 17.—Affair of the Champ de Mars.

" *Thursday*, 21.—Medicine at six; and the end of my whey."

There is something exceedingly striking in these trifling and insignificant entries, relating, apparently, to the most ordinary course of everyday life, when contrasted with the agitating and momentous occurrences which took place during the days and nights of the period which they embrace. The earlier part of this month of June 1791 was occupied on the part of the royal family with anxious discussions with some of their most attached adherents as to an escape from the dangers which now surrounded them and in secret preparations for their memorable attempt to fly from France. On the 20th (a day which the King commemorates by the word " *Rien* "), these preparations were completed through the energy and activity of the Queen (Louis himself being as passive as usual), and their flight, which the King expresses by the words " Left Paris," began at midnight.

" On the 20th of June," says Thiers, " about midnight the King, the Queen, Madame Elizabeth, Madame de Tourzel, the governess of the children of France, disguised themselves, and one by one left the palace. Madame de Tourzel, with the children, hastened to the Petit Carrousel, and got into a carriage driven by M. de Fersen, a young

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foreign nobleman, disguised as a coachman. The King immediately joined them. But the Queen, who had gone out accompanied by a *garde du corps*, gave them all the utmost alarm. Neither she nor her guide knew the way; they lost it, and did not get to the Petit Carrousel till an hour afterwards. On arriving there she met the carriage of M. de La Fayette, whose servants carried torches. She concealed herself under the gateway of the Louvre; and escaping this danger, reached the carriage where she was so anxiously waited for. Thus reunited, the family set out. After a long drive, and a second loss of their way, they arrived at the Porte Saint Martin, and got into a berlin with six horses, which was waiting to receive them. Madame de Tourzel, under the name of Madame Korff was to pass for a mother travelling with her children; the King was to personate her *valet de chambre*, and three *gardes du corps*, in disguise, were to precede the carriage as couriers, or follow it as servants. At length they got clear of Paris, accompanied by the prayers of M. de Fersen, who returned to Paris in order to take the road to Brussels."

The circumstances attending the arrest of the royal family at Varennes are too well known to require repetition. The King, it would appear, brought this misfortune upon himself by constantly putting his head out of the carriage window. In consequence of this imprudence he was recognised at Chalons; but the person who made the discovery, and who was at first disposed to reveal it, was persuaded by the mayor, a zealous royalist, to say nothing. When the travellers got to Saint Menehould, the King, still with his head out at the window, was recognised by young Drouet, the postmaster's son, who immediately set off full speed to Varennes, the next stage, where he arrived before the King, and took measures to stop his further progress. In this extremity the Queen took the lead, and displayed so much energy in insisting on being allowed to proceed, that she seems at one time to have almost succeeded. The King at first wished to preserve his incognito, and a

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warm altercation took place; one of the municipal officers maintaining that he knew him to be the King. "Since you recognise him for your King, then," said the Queen, "address him with the respect which you owe him!"

"On Wednesday the 22d," says the King in his diary, "left Varennes at five or six in the morning." And he proceeds on that and the three following days to chronicle his journey back to Paris, as if it were the most ordinary thing in the world, instead of being full of deep and even tragical interest.

About six in the morning M. Romeuf, an aide-de-camp of La Fayette, who had been sent after the fugitives, bearing a decree of the National Assembly for their arrest, arrived at Varennes, and found the carriage and six in readiness, and the horses' heads turned towards Paris. Romeuf, with an air of grief, handed the decree to the King. The whole family joined in exclaiming against La Fayette. Romeuf said that his general and himself had only done their duty in pursuing them, but had hoped they should not come up with them. The Queen seized the decree, threw it on her children's bed, and then snatched it up, and threw it away, saying it would sully them. "Madame," said Romeuf, who was devoted to her, "would you choose that any other than I should witness this violence?" The Queen instantly recovered herself, and resumed her wonted dignity.

Thiers and some other authorities say that the journey from Varennes to Paris took eight days; and this at first threw suspicion on the genuineness of the King's diary, according to which he left Varennes on the morning of Wednesday, the 22d, and arrived in Paris on the morning of Saturday, the 25th; three days in all. But this is correct according to Thiers himself, who afterwards says: "The effect of the journey to Varennes was to destroy all respect for the King, to accustom the public to the idea of doing without him, and to produce the desire for a republic. On the very morning of his arrival (Saturday, the 25th of June) the Assembly had provided for everything

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by a decree, whereby Louis XVI. was suspended from his functions, and a guard placed over his person, and those of the Queen and the Dauphin. Sentinels," adds this historian, "watched continually at their door, and never lost sight of them. One day the King, wishing to ascertain whether he was actually a prisoner, appeared at a door; the sentinel opposed his passage. 'Do you know me?' said the King. 'Yes, Sire,' answered the soldier. The King was allowed merely to walk in the Tuileries in the morning, before the garden was open to the public."

The following month—July 1791—is comprehensively disposed of in the diary by the words, "Nothing the whole month. Mass in the gallery." This month, however, was a momentous one for the King. The republican spirit now displayed itself, and the cry of "No King!" became, for the first time, general in the capital. On the 16th of July the Commissioners appointed by the Assembly to inquire into the affair of Varennes presented their report, exculpating the King, and declaring the inviolability of his person. This report produced a violent commotion among the Jacobin party, headed by Robespierre, Pétion, and others; and a petition against it was exhibited upon an altar in the Champ de Mars, to be signed by all who chose it. A great tumult ensued; La Fayette arrived at the head of a body of military, who fired upon the people, and dispersed them with great slaughter, though not till they had torn to pieces two or three soldiers. This sanguinary scene, arising out of a question involving the King's personal safety, is the "affair of the Champ de Mars," noted in the diary on the 17th of July, and is one of the occurrences comprised under the general entry of "Nothing the whole month. Mass in the gallery"![1]

There are only two occasions on which the King mentions his wife and children (we do not speak of the

[1] The Diary having obviously been intended as a basis for those records of the King's hunting parties mentioned by Soulavie (see p. 316), "nothing," of course, only meant "no hunting" or "no game."

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entries of money paid the Queen's jeweller), and quits his habitual conciseness to indulge in ampler details. There are accounts of the Queen's accouchements, more resembling the official reports of a Court chamberlain than the narrative of an anxious husband and father. They are in precisely the same style; and it is sufficient, therefore, to give that of the birth of the Dauphin,—not that poor boy whose fate it makes one's heart bleed to think of, but the King's eldest born, a child of extraordinary promise, who had the happiness to die in infancy.

"Accouchement of the Queen, 22d October 1781.

"The Queen passed the night of the 21st-22d October very well. She felt some slight pains when she awoke, which did not prevent her from taking the bath. I gave no orders for the shooting-party, which I was to have at Saclé, till noon. Between twelve and half-past twelve her pains increased; and at a quarter past one she was delivered very favourably of a boy. During the labour the only persons in the chamber were Madame de Lamballe, Monsieur the Comte d'Artois, my aunts, Madame de Chimay, Madame de Mailly, Madame d'Ossun, Madame de Tavannes, and Madame de Guéménée, who went alternately into the adjoining room, which had been left empty. In the great closet there were my household and the Queen's; and the persons having the *grandes entrées* and the *sous-gouvernantes*, who entered towards the end, kept themselves at the bottom of the room, without intercepting the air.

"Of all the Princes to whom Madame de Lamballe had given notice, the Duc d'Orléans only arrived before the accouchement. He remained in the chamber, or in that adjoining. The Prince de Condé, M. de Penthièvre, the Duc de Chartres, the Princesse de Condé, and Mademoiselle de Condé arrived after the Queen was delivered, the Duc de Bourbon in the evening, and the Prince de Conti next day. The Queen saw all these Princes next day, one after the other. After the accouchement was over my son was carried into the great closet, where I saw

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him dressed, and delivered him into the hands of Madame de Guéménée, his governess. I announced to the Queen that it was a boy, and he was put upon her bed, and after she had seen him for a little while, everybody retired. I signed letters for the Emperor, the King of Spain, and the Prince of Piedmont, and gave orders for the despatch of the others which I had already signed. At three o'clock I was at chapel, where my son was baptized by Cardinal de Rohan, and held at the font by the Emperor and the Princess of Piedmont, represented by Monsieur and my sister Elizabeth. He was named Louis Joseph Xavier François. My brothers, my sisters, my aunts, the Duc d'Orléans, the Duc de Chartres, the Prince de Condé, and M. de Penthièvre signed the act of baptism. After the ceremony I heard the *Te Deum* performed with music, the Princesses not having had time to dress in the evening.

"While I was looking at the fireworks on the parade the Chief President of the Chamber of Accounts came to pay me his compliments. The others, who were not at Paris, came the day following. Next day at my *levée* the ambassadors came to pay their respects, with the nuncio at their head. At six I received the salutations of a hundred and twenty-five ladies; my brothers, sisters, aunts, and the Princesses were in the apartment.

"On the 29th the Chapter of Notre Dame came to compliment me; as did the judges, the company of arquebusiers, and the *Dames de la Halle*.[1] For nine days all the trades and professions came into the marble court with violins, and everything they could imagine to testify their joy. I had about twelve thousand livres distributed among them. After my son's baptism M. de Vergennes, grand treasurer of the order of the Holy Spirit, brought him the blue ribbon, and M. de Ségur the cross of Saint Louis. The Queen saw her ladies on the 29th, the Princes

[1] The market women of Paris, who by ancient custom were admitted to take a prominent part in public rejoicings.

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and Princesses on the 30th, my household on the 3d, and the rest in succession. On Sunday, the 4th of November, there was a *Te Deum* at the parish church of Versailles, and an illumination throughout the city."

There is a good deal more to the same purpose, and the whole is as cold, stiff, and formal as a bulletin drawn up by the Court newsman. Such, however, is the only way in which the monarch ever mentions his wife or his children. He never makes the slightest allusion to any of those little family incidents which it might be supposed would occupy the mind of a husband and a parent, and would naturally have a prominent place in a private record of domestic occurrences. The total silence of his diary on such subjects is a proof of the extreme coldness of Louis' nature, and accords with the strange and unaccountable indifference with which he treated the beautiful Princess to whom he was married in the very flower of his age. Her charms, her graces, her talents, her accomplishments made no impression on her youthful husband. He remained for years a stranger to her society and to her couch; and it was more to his taste to spend his days in hunting and lock-making than to share in her elegant and intellectual pastimes. Gradually, however, she acquired the influence of a strong mind over a weak one; his indolence, vacillation, and timidity found resources in her courage, energy, and decision; and his original indifference, and even aversion, was at length succeeded by unbounded deference and submission, and by a degree of passive acquiescence in the dictates of her proud and impetuous spirit, which probably hastened the ruin of both.

But "sweet are the uses of adversity;" and the effect of calamity has never been more apparent in exalting and purifying the character than in the instances of Louis XVI. and his Queen. Their latter days have thrown a radiance over their memory. Had the reign of Louis been tranquil, and had he ended his days in peace, what would have been his character with posterity? That of

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the most imbecile monarch who ever sat on the throne of France,—of a man without passions, affections, or capacity, —sunk in sloth, and making the most frivolous amusements the occupation of his life. The Queen, too, how would she have been described? As vain, haughty, and imperious,—the votary alternately of pleasure and of ambition, and dividing her life between dissipation and intrigue. Their faults were nourished and their virtues blighted by the atmosphere of the most corrupted court in Europe. The great and good qualities of which they themselves were probably unconscious, and of which the world would never have been aware, which in the season of prosperity were dormant and almost extinct, were roused into action by the rude hand of misfortune; and it was when this illustrious pair were "fallen from their high estate" that they presented one of the noblest as well as most affecting spectacles that ever has engaged the admiration and sympathy of the world.

The Early Days of Marie Antoinette.

The following extract is taken from Sir Nathaniel Wraxall's *Posthumous Memoirs*, where this lively and spirited writer, whose reputation for accuracy has long since been vindicated from the unjust charges brought against him, gives an account of the early Court days of Marie Antoinette. In the height of her beauty that Queen attracted all men towards her, and with an innocent freedom she dispensed with those conventionalities to which the Court had been too much accustomed. This sometimes led to misconstruction, and her enemies made a base use of this latitude to rouse popular feeling against her.

"Two of the most interesting Princesses whom the eighteenth century produced, and who will be considered as such by posterity, were unquestionably Maria Theresa and Marie Antoinette of Austria—one, the mother; the other, the daughter; both endowed with qualities fitted to sustain the throne in times of the greatest difficulty. The

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former, when driven from her hereditary dominions by the French and Bavarians in 1741, found resources in her own mind which impelled her to resist, and ultimately enabled her to expel, her enemies. . . . With equal self-devotion and fortitude, no man can doubt, would the late ill-fated Queen of France have conducted herself during the course of the French Revolution if, like her mother, she had reigned in her own right. To Louis she might have justly said, as Catherine de Foix did to her husband John d'Albret, King of Navarre, nearly three centuries earlier: 'Si nous fussions nés, vous, Catherine de Foix, et moi, Don Jean d'Albret, nous n'aurions jamais perdu la Navarre.' More unfortunate even than Margaret of Anjou, wife of our Henry VI., Marie Antoinette, after beholding, like the English Queen, her husband immolated, and her only son imprisoned by ferocious assassins, was ultimately conducted in a cart, with her hands tied behind her, as a common criminal to the place of execution. In the autumn of 1784 she had nearly completed her twenty-ninth year. Her beauty, like the mother of Æneas, '*incessu patuit.*' It consisted in her manner, air, and movements, all which were full of dignity as well as grace. No person could look at her without conceiving a favourable impression of her intelligence and spirit. The King was heavy and inert, destitute of activity or elasticity; wanting all the characteristic attributes of youth; who, though not corpulent, yet might be termed unwieldy, and who rather tumbled from one foot to the other than walked with firmness. His Queen could not move a step or perform an act in which majesty was not blended. She possessed all the vigour of mind, decision of character, and determination to maintain the royal authority, which were wanting in Louis. Nor does it demand any exertion of our belief to be convinced that she would have preferred death on the 10th of August 1792, as she loudly declared, rather than have fled for shelter to the intimidated Assembly which transferred her to the *Temple.* Her understanding was not highly cultivated, nor her acquaintance

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with works of literature extensive; but her heart could receive and cherish some of the best emotions of our nature. Friendship, gratitude, maternal affection, conjugal love, fortitude, contempt of danger and of death, all these and many other virtues, however they might be choked up by the rank soil of a court, yet manifested themselves under the pressure of calamity.

"While I do this justice to her distinguished intellectual endowments and natural disposition, the impartiality which I profess compels me to disclose her defects with the same unreserve. She had many, some of them belonging to the *queen*, others more properly appertaining to the *woman*. Like the wife of Germanicus, she wanted caution and due command over her words and actions. Descended as she was from a house which during successive centuries had been the rival and the inveterate enemy of France, young, destitute of experience, surrounded by courtiers who dwelt upon her smiles, she did not sufficiently appreciate the dangers of such an elevation, and she violated frequently the most ordinary maxims of prudence. Her high and haughty temper, made for dominion, impelled her to regard the people as populace; and she seemed always to say while she looked round her:

'Odi profanum vulgus, et arceo.'

This well-known feature of her character aggravated all the errors or mistakes of her conduct, and enabled detraction to accuse her of the crime of being not only an Austrian by birth, but such in heart and inclination. So long as she had not produced a son, the imputation wore at least a semblance of probability; and a similar charge had been made in the preceding century, with some reason, against Anne of Austria. Louis XIII.'s consort was, in fact, pursued criminally by the Cardinal de Richelieu for maintaining a treasonable correspondence with her brother, Philip IV., King of Spain. The birth of a Dauphin, who afterwards became Louis XIV., rescued Anne from ministerial prosecution; but Marie

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Antoinette, even after she had given an heir to the monarchy in 1781, and a second son in 1785, was still accused by popular malevolence, though most unjustly, of remitting pecuniary supplies to her brother, the Emperor Joseph II. Whatever might have been her predilections before she became a mother, we cannot doubt that subsequently to that event she beheld only the interests of France before her eyes. Her judgment did not, however, equal the elevation of her mind. The expensive purchase of the Palace of Saint Cloud from the Duc d'Orléans in her name was an act of great imprudence. Her contempt or disregard of appearances exposed her to severe comments; as did her strong partialities and preferences, manifested for various individuals of both sexes. The renunciation which she made of etiquette, and her emancipation from court form, though calculated to heighten the enjoyments of private society, broke down one of the barriers that surrounded the throne. Her personal vanity, not to say coquetry, was excessive and censurable. She passed more time in studying and adjusting the ornaments of her dress than became a woman placed upon the most dangerous eminence in Europe. Mademoiselle Bertin, who was her directress on this article, could indeed more easily obtain an audience of Marie Antoinette than persons of the first rank. Pleasure and dissipation offered for her irresistible charms.

"But was she, or was she not, it may be asked, a woman of gallantry? Did she ever violate her nuptial fidelity? Are we to rank her among the virtuous, or among the licentious princesses recorded in history? I am well aware that the illustrious female in question did not always restrain the marks of her predilection within prudent limits, and she thereby furnished ample matter for detraction. So did Anne Bullen; but I imagine there are very few, if any, persons who believe that the unfortunate mother of Elizabeth was false to Henry VIII.'s bed. I have personally known many of the individuals, commonly supposed or asserted to have been favoured lovers of the late

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Queen of France. Ignorance and malevolence furnished the principal or the only proofs of criminality. Some of these men, thus distinguished, were foreigners and Englishmen. At their head I might place the late Lord Hugh Seymour, then the Honourable Hugh Seymour Conway, a captain in the navy. After the peace of 1783, when he was about twenty-five, he visited Paris and Versailles. Like all his six brothers, he exceeded in height the ordinary proportion of mankind; and he possessed great personal advantages, sustained by most engaging manners. The Queen, who met him at the Duchesse de Polignac's, among the crowd of eminent and elegant strangers there assembled, honoured him with marks of her particular notice, appeared to take a pleasure in conversing with him, and unquestionably displayed towards him great partiality. On this foundation was raised the accusation. I believe the present Earl Whitworth made a similar impression on Marie Antoinette, about the same time. He too was highly favoured by nature, and his address exceeded even his figure. At every period of his life queens and duchesses and countesses have showered on him their regard. The Duke of Dorset, recently sent ambassador to France, being an intimate friend of Mr. Whitworth, made him known to the Queen, who not only distinguished him by flattering marks of her attention, but interested herself in promoting his fortune, which then stood greatly in need of such a patronage. As Lord Whitworth is at this hour a British Earl, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, decorated with various orders of knighthood, and one of the most distinguished subjects of the Crown, I shall digress from Marie Antoinette for a short time in order to relate some particulars of his rise and elevation in life.

"Lord Whitworth is about three years younger than myself, and must have been born in, or towards, 1754. His father, who had received the honour of knighthood, and was likewise a member of the House of Commons, left at his decease a numerous family involved in embarrassed circumstances. Mr. Whitworth, the eldest son,

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having embraced the military profession, served in the Guards and attained the rank of lieutenant-colonel; but I believe was more distinguished during this period of his career by success in gallantries than by any professional merits or brilliant services. Soon after his thirtieth year he quitted the army; and as his fortune was very limited, he next aspired to enter the *corps diplomatique*. The circumstance becoming known to the Queen of France, she recommended his interests strongly to the Duke of Dorset, who, not without great difficulty, obtained at length in the year 1786, for his friend, the appointment of Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of Warsaw. I know from good authority that when that nomination was bestowed on him, no little impediment to his departure arose from the want of a few hundred pounds to defray the unavoidable expenses of his equipment. The unfortunate Stanislaus Poniatowski then reigned over the nominal monarchy of Poland, and Mr. Whitworth gave such satisfaction while residing at Warsaw in his public character, that on a vacancy occurring at St. Petersburg about two years afterwards he was sent as British envoy to Russia. During his residence of eleven or more years on the banks of the Neva, he received the Order of the Bath, and was subsequently raised to the dignity of an Irish baron. But as very ample pecuniary resources were necessary for sustaining the dignity of his official situation, to support which in an adequate manner his salary as minister from the British Court was altogether unequal, he did not hesitate to avail himself of female aid. Among the distinguished ladies of high rank about Catherine's person at that time was the Countess Gerbetzow, who, though married, possessed a very considerable fortune at her own disposal. Such was her partiality for the English envoy that she in a great measure provided, clothed, and defrayed his household from her own purse. In return for such solid proofs of attachment he engaged to give her his hand in marriage, a stipulation the accomplishment of which was necessarily deferred till she could obtain a divorce from

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her husband. Catherine's brilliant reign being closed, and her eccentric successor having adopted those pernicious measures which within a short period of time produced his destruction, Lord Whitworth returned in 1800 to this country. He was then about fifty years of age, and still possessed as many personal graces as are perhaps ever retained at that period of life. . . .

"The late Duke of Dorset himself was by vulgar misrepresentation included in the list of the Princess' pretended lovers. Unquestionably he enjoyed much of her regard and confidence, with proofs of both which sentiments she honoured him during his embassy in France. He preserved a letter-case, which I have seen, full of her notes addressed to him. They were written on private concerns, commissions that she requested him to execute for her, principally regarding English articles of dress or ornament, and other innocent or unimportant matters. Colonel Edward Dillon, with whom I was particularly acquainted, was likewise highly distinguished by her. He descended, I believe, collaterally, from the noble Irish family of the Earls of Roscommon, though his father carried on the trade of a wine merchant at Bordeaux. But he was commonly denominated 'Le Comte Edouard Dillon,' and 'Le beau Dillon.' In my estimation, he possessed little pretension to the latter epithet; but he surpassed most men in stature, like Lord Whitworth, Lord Hugh Seymour, and the other individuals on whom the French Queen cast a favourable eye. That she showed him some imprudent marks of predilection at a ball, which, when they took place, excited comment, is true; but they prove only indiscretion and levity on her part. Even the Comte d'Artois was enumerated among her lovers, by Parisian malignity; an accusation founded on his personal graces, his dissolute manners, and his state of separation, as well as of alienation from his own wife. The hatred of the populace towards the Queen became naturally inflamed by this supposed mixture of a species of incest with matrimonial infidelity; and it was to the base pas-

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sions of the multitude that such atrocious fabrications were addressed by her enemies.

"If Marie Antoinette ever violated her nuptial vow (which, however, I am far from asserting), either Count Fersen or Monsieur de Vaudreuil were the favoured individuals. Of the former nobleman, who was a native of Sweden, though of Scottish descent, I may hereafter have occasion to make mention. Vaudreuil had received from nature many qualities, personal and intellectual, of the most ingratiating description. The Queen delighting much in his society, he was naturally invited to the parties at Madame de Polignac's, where her Majesty never failed to be present. But there were other parties in which Vaudreuil performed a conspicuous part, and respecting which I feel it impossible to observe a total silence; yet of which it is difficult to speak without involuntarily awakening suspicions or reflections injurious to the memory of the Princess. They were called 'descampativos;' being held in the gardens of Versailles; where at a spot sheltered from view by lofty woods, about forty individuals, in equal numbers of both sexes, all selected or approved by the Queen, repaired at the appointed time. An altar of turf being erected, the election of a high priest followed, who, by virtue of his office, possessed the power of pairing the different couples for the space of one hour, at his arbitrary pleasure. On pronouncing the word 'descampativos,' they all scampered off in different directions; being, however, bound by the compact to reassemble at the same place, when the hour should be expired. Those persons who maintained that the amusement was altogether innocent as far as Marie Antoinette had in it any participation, observed that the King repeatedly sanctioned it by his presence. They added that he appeared to enjoy the diversion not less than any other individual of the company, and was himself repeatedly paired with different ladies. Vaudreuil generally performed the function of pontiff; and as that office conferred the power, not only of associating the

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respective couples, but of nominating his own partner, he frequently chose the Queen. Her enemies, indeed, asserted that one of her principal objects in setting on foot the diversion was to overcome by temptation combined with opportunity the scrupulous as well as troublesome fidelity observed by Louis towards her person and bed. In this expectation they pretended she was successful; partners, such as would not interpose any impediments or delays to his Majesty's wishes, being selected for him by the high priest. That a *game*, or diversion, such as I have described, and other similar amusements which in common language we denominate *romps*, did occasionally take place at Versailles, or at Trianon during the first years after Marie Antoinette became Queen, when she was between twenty and twenty-five years of age, admits of no denial. I consider them, nevertheless, to have been exaggerated by her enemies, and to have been at least as free from stain or guilt as were the romping parties which we know our own Elizabeth permitted herelf with Admiral Seymour, under her brother Edward's reign. Even Mary, Princess of Orange, afterwards Queen of William III., a most exemplary and virtuous woman, yet did not hesitate at two-and-twenty to receive instructions from the Duke of Monmouth, as her *dancing-master*, while he resided at the Hague, towards the end of Charles II.'s reign. The Duke, it must be remembered, was the handsomest man of his time; and if we may credit contemporary authority, the petticoats of the *scholar* were adapted to the *lesson*. But Louis XVI. might exclaim with *the Moor:*

> 'Tis not to make me jealous,
> To say—my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,
> Is free of speech, sings, plays, and dances well:
> Where virtue is, these are more virtuous.'

"I do not, indeed, mean to maintain that the virtue of the late Queen of France can be placed on the same level with the honour of her two immediate predecessors on the French throne, namely, Maria Theresa of Spain, consort

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of Louis XIV., or Maria Leczinska of Poland, the wife of Louis XV.—Princesses so correct in their deportment that detraction never ventured to impute to either of them the slightest deviation from propriety of conduct. But, on the other hand, it ought not to be forgotten that these Queens, who fell far below Marie Antoinette in personal as well as in mental endowments, who wanted all her graces and powers of captivating mankind, were likewise, each of them, married to Princes highly adorned by nature, and cast in her finest mould. Louis XVI. might inspire respect, or affection, or esteem, but did not appear, even at twenty, made to awaken sentiments of love. It demanded consequently a stronger principle of moral action to keep her in the right path than might have sufficed in the two former instances. With Anne of Austria she may be more justly compared, whose conjugal virtue forms a subject of historic doubt; neither above suspicion, nor yet abandoned to censure. Like her, Marie Antoinette remained many years a wife before she became a mother. The birth of Louis XIV., born after more than two-and-twenty years of marriage, especially if we reflect on the extenuated state of Louis XIII. at the time, whose whole life was a perpetual disease, might well excite doubts of his Queen's fidelity in the minds of her contemporaries. Marie Antoinette brought into the world a daughter before the expiration of the ninth year from the celebration of her nuptials; and the cause of her not having sooner gratified the expectations of the French by giving heirs to the monarchy—a fact which was well known and ascertained—depended, not on *her*, but on the King, her husband. Both Princesses were handsome; both inclined to gallantry and coquetry. Anne of Austria manifested for Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, no less than for Mazarin, as strong a partiality, and committed acts as imprudent, as any which were ever attributed to the late Queen of France. She—I mean Anne of Austria—passed likewise a great part of her life in total separation from her unamiable husband; while the utmost external harmony, if not real affection, always sub-

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sisted between Louis XVI. and his consort. The balance of reputation between the two Queens inclines in favour of the latter Princess. And how gloriously did she redeem the levities, or the indiscretions, committed at Trianon and at Versailles by the magnanimity which she displayed during her confinement in the Tuileries, at the Temple, and in the Conciergerie! What a display of conjugal duty and maternal tenderness did she not exhibit; what heroism and resources of mind, what superiority even to death, did she not manifest, while in the power of that atrocious mob of rebels and assassins, denominated the Republican Government! Whatever may have been the measure of her errors while in the splendour of royal prosperity, she will be ranked by posterity among the most illustrious, high-minded, and unfortunate Princesses who have appeared in modern ages."

THE QUEEN'S HOUSEHOLD.

First Office: The Superintendant.

Queen Maria Leczinska, the wife of Louis XV., had Mademoiselle de Clermont, a Princess of the blood, as the superintendant of her household. Mademoiselle de Clermont died, and the Queen requested the King not to have the vacancy filled up, the privileges of the office of superintendant being so extensive that they were felt as a restraint on the sovereign. They included a right to nominate to employments, to determine differences between the holders of offices, to dismiss[1] or suspend the servants, etc. There was therefore no superintendant after

[1] The servants were suspended by order of the head of the household for a fortnight, a month, or more. Dismission was more common than suspension; but resignations were signed by the parties themselves. It must not be forgotten that all the offices were trusts, and that the holders of them had been sworn before the Queen, the superintendant, the lady of honour, or the first gentleman usher.

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Mademoiselle de Clermont, and Queen Marie Antoinette had none at the time of her accession. But shortly afterwards the Queen, interesting herself for the young Princesse de Lamballe, who was left a widow and childless, determined to give her greater personal consideration by placing her at Court, and therefore appointed her superintendant of her household. She constantly resided at Versailles in the commencement of her service, and was very scrupulous in the punctual execution of all its duties. The Queen checked her a little in those which stood in the way of her inclinations; and after the intimacy between the Queen and Madame de Polignac had been formed, she attended Court with less assiduity. Her devoted attachment led her, at the moment when all the eminent persons in the kingdom were emigrating, to return to France and the Queen, who was then deprived of all her friends, and of that intimate connection which had occasioned a kind of distance between the Queen and the superintendant. The tragic end of the Princess must heighten the feeling excited by her zeal and fidelity. The Princess superintendant was, moreover, head of the Queen's council; but her functions in that capacity could only become important in case of a regency.

Lady of Honour: The Princesse de Chimay.

The place of lady of honour losing many of its advantages in consequence of the appointment of a superintendant, Madame la Maréchale de Mouchy gave in her resignation. When the Queen conferred the title of superintendant upon the Princesse de Lamballe, the lady of honour appointed to the offices administered the oaths in her absence, made presentations, and sent invitations in the Queen's name for the excursions to Marly, Choisy, and Fontainebleau, and for balls, suppers, and hunting parties. All changes in the furniture, and the linen and laces for the bed and toilette, were likewise made under her orders; the head woman of the Queen's wardrobe managed these

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matters jointly with the lady of honour. Up to the time when M. de Silhouette was appointed comptroller-general, cloths, napkins, body linen, and lace had been renewed every three years; that minister prevailed on Louis XV. to decide that they should be renewed only once in five years. M. Necker, during his first administration, increased the interval of renewal by two years, so that it took place only every seven years. The whole of the old articles belonged to the lady of honour. When a foreign Princess was married to the heir presumptive, or a son of France, it was the etiquette to go and meet her with her wedding clothes. The young Princess was undressed in the pavilion usually built upon the frontiers for the occasion, and every article of her apparel, without exception, was changed; notwithstanding which the foreign Courts furnished their Princesses also with rich wedding clothes, which were considered the lawful perquisites of the lady of honour and the tirewoman. It is to be observed that emoluments and profits of all kinds generally belonged to the great offices. On the death of Maria Leczinska, the whole of her chamber furniture was given up to the Comtesse de Noailles, afterwards Maréchale de Mouchy, with the exception of two large rock crystal lustres which Louis XV. ordered should be preserved as appurtenances to the crown. The tirewoman was entrusted with the care of ordering materials, robes, and court dresses, and of checking and paying bills; all accounts were submitted to her, and were paid only on her signature and by her order—from shoes up to Lyons embroidered dresses. I believe the fixed annual sum for this department of expenditure was one hundred thousand francs; but there might be additional sums when the funds appropriated to this purpose were insufficient. The tirewoman sold the cast-off gowns and ornaments for her own benefit; the lace for head-dresses, ruffles, and gowns was provided by her, and kept distinct from those of which the lady of honour had the charge. There was a secretary of the wardrobe, to whom the care of keeping the books, accounts of pay-

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ments, and correspondence relating to this department was confided.

The tirewoman had likewise under her order a principal under-tirewoman, charged with the care and preservation of all the Queen's dresses; two women to fold and press such articles as required it; two valets, and one porter of the wardrobe. The latter brought every morning into the Queen's apartments baskets covered with taffety, containing all that she was to wear during the day, and large cloths of green taffety covering the robes and the full dresses. The valet of the wardrobe on duty presented every morning a large book to the first *femme de chambre*, containing patterns of the gowns, full dresses, undresses, etc. Every pattern was marked, to show to which sort it belonged. The first *femme de chambre* presented this book to the Queen on her awaking, with a pin-cushion; her Majesty stuck pins in those articles which she chose for the day—one for the dress, one for the afternoon undress, and one for the full evening dress for card or supper parties in the private apartments. The book was then taken back to the wardrobe, and all that was wanted for the day was soon after brought in in large taffety wrappers. The wardrobe woman, who had the care of the linen, in her turn brought in a covered basket containing two or three chemises and handkerchiefs. The morning basket was called *prêt du jour*. In the evening she brought in one containing the night-gown and night-cap, and the stockings for the next morning; this basket was called *prêt de la nuit*. They were in the department of the lady of honour, the tirewoman having nothing to do with the linen. Nothing was put in order or taken care of by the Queen's women. As soon as the toilette was over, the valets and porter belonging to the wardrobe were called in, and they carried all away in a heap, in the taffety wrappers, to the tirewoman's wardrobe, where all were folded up again, hung up, examined, and cleaned with so much regularity and care that even the cast-off clothes scarcely looked as if they had been worn. The tirewoman's ward-

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robe consisted of three large rooms surrounded with closets, some furnished with drawers and others with shelves; there were also large tables in each of these rooms, on which the gowns and dresses were spread out and folded up.

For the winter the Queen had generally twelve full dresses, twelve undresses called fancy dresses, and twelve rich hoop petticoats for the card and supper parties in the smaller apartments.

She had as many for the summer; those for the spring served likewise for the autumn. All these dresses were discarded at the end of each season, unless, indeed, she retained some that she particularly liked. I am not speaking of muslin or cambric gowns, or others of the same kind—they were lately introduced; but such as these were not renewed at each returning season, they were kept several years. The chief women were charged with the care and examination of the diamonds; this important duty was formerly confided to the tirewoman, but for many years had been included in the business of the first *femmes de chambre.*

The Queen's Bed-Chamber.

There was formerly but one first *femme de chambre.* The large income derived from the place, and the favour by which it was generally accompanied, rendered a division of it necessary.

The Queen had two, and two reversioners:

The incumbents were—Madame de Misery, a daughter of the Comte de Chemant, and by the side of her mother, who descended from a Montmorency, cousin to the Prince de Tingry, who always called her cousin, even before the Queen; Madame Thibaut, formerly *femme de chambre* of Queen Maria Leczinska.

The reversioners were—Madame Campan and Madame Regnier de Jarjaye, whose husband was a staff officer with the rank of colonel.

The duty of the chief *femmes de chambre* was to attend

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to the performance of the whole service of the bed-chamber, to receive the Queen's orders for her times of rising, dressing, going out, and making journeys; they were, moreover, charged with the Queen's privy purse, and the payment of pensions and gratuities. The diamonds, too, were entrusted to them. They did the honours of the service when the ladies of honour or tirewomen were absent, and in the same manner acted for them in making presentations to the Queen. Their appointments did not exceed twelve thousand francs; but all the wax candles of the bed-chamber, closets, and card-room belonged to them daily, whether lighted or not, and this perquisite raised their income to more than fifty thousand francs each. The candles for the great closet of the *salon* of the nobility, the room preceding the Queen's chamber, and those for the antechambers and corridors, belonged to the servants of the chamber. The undress gowns were, whenever left off, carried by order of the tirewoman to the chief *femmes de chambre.* The court and full dresses, with all other accessories of the Queen's toilette, belonged to the tirewoman herself.

The Queens were very circumspect in the choice of their principal women; they generally took care to select them from among the twelve ordinary women whom they knew well in order to keep this confidential situation exempt from the intrigues of the Court and capital. Queen Marie Antoinette, who knew Madame Campan when she was Reader to the daughters of Louis XV., and wished to have her as first woman, made her a promise of that place; but for several years she filled the situation of ordinary woman. A lady of noble family, much beloved by the Queen and distinguished by her upon her arrival in France, who flattered herself with the hopes of becoming first woman, was disappointed of the place in consequence of her imprudence in taking advantage of the kindness of the young Dauphiness, who twice paid her debts at the time she was expecting to be appointed first woman. The Dauphiness when she became Queen

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assigned as the reason for her refusal that it was very imprudent to entrust money to persons known to be extravagant and thoughtless, as it exposed the honour of families as well as the deposit to danger. The Queen, however, softened down her refusal by placing the lady's children at Saint Cyr and the military school and granting them pensions. At the period of the constitution, when it was proposed to reform the household by abolishing the titles of ladies of honour and gentlemen ushers, and the King determined to introduce the strictest economy into all parts of his own expenses and those of the Queen, it was decided that the daily renewal of the wax candles should be discontinued. The office of first woman was by this reduction deprived of its greatest revenue. The King, after consulting with M. de Laporte, fixed the income of the first women at twenty-four thousand livres each, with the addition of the functions and perquisites of the tirewoman, whose office was suppressed. He observed at the same time that the first women ought to be selected from among persons of merit and good birth, and that their income ought to be sufficient to place them above intrigue or corruption. The plan of the household formed after the constitutional laws was decreed, but the military part was the only one put in execution.

The Queen had twelve women in ordinary.

The eight senior women of the Queen had incomes of three thousand six hundred francs.

The other four had two thousand four hundred livres.

They had three hundred livres less when they had lodgings in the Château of Versailles, or apartments assigned them. When the King went to Compiègne in July and Fontainebleau in October three hundred livres a journey were added to their salaries to defray the expenses of moving. It must be observed that these journeys, even if economically performed, cost from a thousand to twelve hundred livres. But the husbands of these ladies had all honourable and lucrative situations, and the

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emoluments of places of this description were not at all thought of; the support and protection of the Queen were the only things that made them canvassed for. I remember when the poorest among them had an income of from fifteen to twenty thousand francs, and some of them from their husbands' circumstances had from sixty to eighty thousand francs a year; but these fortunes came from financial employments or places of hereditary property, and were no way drawn from the royal treasury, the pensions granted being few and inconsiderable.

There was no pension granted to the first women; when they retired they retained the whole emoluments of their post, which was too considerable to admit of their being indemnified for it. Those who had the places in reversion acted for them, and received a salary of six thousand livres.

The *femmes de chambre* in ordinary were allowed four thousand livres pension after thirty years', three thousand after twenty-five years', and two thousand after twenty years' service.

The twelve women served in turns, four every week, two of these every day alternately; so that the four women who had served one week were the next fortnight at leisure, unless a substitute were wanted, and in the week of duty they had intervals of two or three days. There was no table appointed for the female service, except when the Court left Versailles; the first women had their kitchen and cook. The others had their dinners taken to them in their apartment.

Wardrobe Woman.

A person named R—— was entrusted with all matters relating to this post, but as her service lasted all the year round she was very useful in several particulars of internal domestic service, which would have been otherwise but ill performed by women of the class who served the

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Queen. Her usefulness and the kindness of her mistress had unfortunately made her services but too indispensable. Some particulars relative to the departure for Varennes could not be concealed from her, and it appears clear that she betrayed the Queen's secret to some of the deputies or members of the commune of Paris.[1] She was under the immediate orders of the first *femme de chambre*, who frequently, in case of a vacancy, procured the place for her own *femme de chambre*. When the Queen, on her return from Varennes, dismissed this woman R——, she put the governess of Madame Campan's son in her place.

There were also two women, charged with all that belonged to the baths, who gave them their exclusive attention. The flowers, vases, porcelain, and all the ornaments of the apartment were arranged every morning by the wardrobe woman.

Master of the Wardrobe.

This office, important as it may be about a Prince was but a mere name about a Princess, the tirewoman being charged with all that related to his department, and having under her orders a secretary of the wardrobe for correspondence and payment of demands. The income of the master of the wardrobe was, notwithstanding, sixty thousand francs. The office was held by the Comte de la Mortiere, who died a general, and in reversion by M. Ponjaud, *fermier-général*. Its only prerogative was its right of entrance into the chamber.

First Valet de Chambre.

The functions of first *femme de chambre* had in the same manner reduced this office to the mere title, and a right of entrance to the toilette. The salary was forty thousand francs.

[1] See vol. ii. pp. 147-148.

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Train-Bearer in Ordinary.

This office had daily and assiduous duties attached to it. To hold it it was necessary to be either noble, the son of an ennobled person, or decorated with the cross of Saint Louis; the first gentleman usher being obliged to receive him into his carriage when attending the Court *en suite*, would not otherwise have consented to sit with him. This officer suffered continual mortification, being obliged by etiquette to give up the Queen's train to her page whenever her Majesty entered the chapel or the inner apartments of the King; so that after having borne the train in the great apartment and the mirror gallery, he gave it up to the page at the entrance to the chapel and the King's apartment. He kept the Queen's mantle or pelisse, but handed them to the first gentleman usher or the first equerry if the Queen wished to make use of them. This practice was called doing the honours of the service, and was always observed by the inferior officer to the superior.

Secretaries for Orders: Messieurs Augéard and Beaugéard.

The business of these officers was to get orders for the payment of her household signed by the Queen; which she did punctually every three months at her dressing-hour.

These secretaries were also to answer letters of etiquette, such as those from sovereigns upon births, deaths, etc. The Queen merely signed letters of this nature.

The private secretary of the secretaries for orders took every Sunday from a table in the Queen's room the whole of the memorials which had been presented to her in the course of the week. He made an abstract of them, and they were sent to the different ministers. Generally

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the applicants got very little by them unless in some extraordinary cases of hardship; but they were, at all events, sure that the original certificates and family documents which are often imprudently annexed to memorials and petitions would be faithfully returned. The Queen took into her private closet all those memorials to which she intended to add postscripts, or which she wished to give to the ministers herself.

Superintendant of Finances, Demesnes, and Affairs: M. Bertier, Intendant of Paris.

This office was almost entirely a sinecure.

Intendant of the Household and Finances: M. Gabriel de Saint Charles.

A sinecure.

Reader: The Abbé de Vermond.

This modest title gives a very inadequate idea of the office and power of the man. Having been the Queen's tutor before her marriage he retained an absolute power over her mind. He was her private secretary, confidant, and (unfortunately) her adviser.

Readers: The Comtesse de Neuilly; Madame de La Borde, in reversion.

This lady married M. de Rohan Chabot; her first husband fell a victim to the Revolution. He was first *valet de chambre* to Louis XV., and brother of the Comtesse d'Angiviller.

The office of female reader was a sinecure during the reign of Marie Antoinette, the Abbé de Vermond objecting to the female reader having the advantage of reading to the Queen. He did not, however, object to the women

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or first women officiating for her. Madame Campan generally had that honour.

Secretary of the Closet: M. Campan.

He was entrusted with every part of the correspondence which did not belong to the secretaries for orders, or the Abbé de Vermond. He enjoyed the confidence of his mistress, and succeeded the Abbé de Vermond, who emigrated on the 17th of July 1789, until his death in September 1791. The Queen could not refrain from tears at his death, which was occasioned by the grief experienced by that faithful servant during the sanguinary scenes of the Revolution.

M. Campan was, besides, librarian to the Queen from the time of her arrival in France, though she suffered M. Moreau, historiographer of France, to retain the title. She came from Versailles strongly prepossessed against that literary man, whose political character had in truth suffered during the parliamentary troubles towards the close of the reign of Louis XV. She caused it to be intimated to him that she wished him to give up the keys of her library to M. Campan, but that out of respect to the King's appointment she left him his title and the salary of his office.

It is to be presumed that the Abbé de Vermond, while fulfilling his duties of tutor at Vienna, was startled at the appointment of a literary man to the situation of librarian to the young Dauphiness, more especially as M. Moreau, elated with his new honour, had printed a work entitled *Library of Madame the Dauphiness*, in which he traced out a course of history and general study for the Princess. The Abbé de Vermond, determined to have the sole charge of duties of that kind, planned Moreau's fall so skilfully long beforehand, that it took place on his very first step. M. Moreau died at an advanced age at his estate of Chambourcy, near Saint Germain. His disgrace, at which he was greatly hurt, probably preserved his life and fortune.

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The Queen had—

Two *valets de chambre* in ordinary.

An usher in ordinary.

(The duty of the offices denominated *ordinary* was to act as substitutes for those who could not perform their quarterly service.)

Four ushers of the chamber serving by the quarter.

Two ushers of the closet.

Two ushers of the antechamber.

Eight *valets de chambre*, per quarter.

Six servants of the chamber, or rather, we may say (in order to convey a more accurate idea of this office), *valets de chambre of the sleeping room.* These six places about the King and Queen were greatly preferred to those of *valet de chambre*, because they were much more in the inner apartments. Those of the King were raised gradually to eighty thousand francs.

An ordinary valet of the wardrobe.

Two valets of the wardrobe, each serving six months.

A porter of the wardrobe who carried the taffety wrappers, clothes, and baskets from the chamber to the tiring wardrobe.

An Ordinary Keeper of the Wardrobe of the Chamber: M. Bonnefri du Plan.

He was also house steward of Petit Trianon. It was he who designed and executed the kind of secretary appropriated to the Queen's jewels, and which was transferred to Saint Cloud. His name and the year in which that piece of furniture, remarkable for its richness, and the paintings with which it was ornamented, was made are engraved upon a plate of copper, which was at the bottom of it. Boulard, an eminent upholsterer of Paris, was long a servant of the wardrobe under the orders of Bonnefri.

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Four Valets de Chambre Upholsterers.

They came to make the bed in the morning and turn it down in the evening.

The Queen had two hairdressers attached to her person. They were the brother and cousin of Léonard, the celebrated hairdresser. The latter also held a place as hairdresser, but did not quit Paris, and came only on Sundays at noon to the Queen's toilette. He also came to Versailles on holidays and at balls. He went to St. Petersburg.

His brother was guillotined at Paris ; his cousin died an emigrant. They were very good and faithful servants.

Medical Department.

A chief physician : M. Vicq-d'Azyr, after the death of M. de Lassone.

A physician in ordinary : M. de Lassone, the son.

A chief surgeon : M. de Chairgnac.

A surgeon in ordinary officiating for the household.

Two common surgeons to attend to the livery servants, kitchen servants, and stable servants.

A body apothecary.

A common apothecary.

A well-furnished dispensary, from which the inferior servants received the necessary drugs and remedies. All above the class of footmen, or kitchen servants, thought it beneath them to avail themselves of this right, but they had liberty to do so.

"Officers of the Table."

A chief *maître d'hôtel :* the Marquis de Talaru.

A *maître d'hôtel* in ordinary : M. Chalut de Verin ; M. de Guimps, in reversion.

Messieurs Dufour and Campan the son, in reversion.

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Cosson de Guimps.

De Malherbe, in reversion.

Despriez, Moreau d'Olibois, in reversion.

Clement de Ris.

These places required nobility. The *maîtres d'hôtel* officiated for the gentlemen ushers in case the Queen should happen to want them when going in grand procession. Quarterly at Versailles, as well as on journeys, they did the honours of a table to which were admitted the lieutenant and exempt of the guards upon duty, the gentleman usher in ordinary, as well as the one for the quarter, and the Queen's almoner.

The Queen had—

One gentleman serving in ordinary.

Twelve gentlemen serving by the quarter.

Their duty was to serve up at the dinners of the King and Queen, and at the *grand couvert.* Notwithstanding the title *gentleman*, this place did not require nobility.

A Comptroller-General of the Queen's Household: M. Mercier de la Source.

This officer inspected and regulated all the expenses of the table, being a kind of medium between the Queen's household and the royal treasury; he had power upon the Queen's mere demand in case of extraordinary expense to draw for additional supplies; the Queen availed herself of this privilege but very seldom, and then only for things relative to the arts which she patronised. It was accordingly M. de la Source who fixed the sum granted for the quarto edition of Metastasio: a tribute which the Queen thought due from her to that celebrated author, her old Italian master at the Court of Vienna.

Four comptrollers of the table serving by the quarter.

A comptroller in ordinary, specially charged with the Queen's table.

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Stables.

Chief equerry: the Comte de Tessé.
The Duc de Polignac, in reversion.
Processional equerry: M. de Salvost.
Governor of the pages: M. de Perdreauville.
A preceptor.
An almoner.
And all the masters employed in the education of the King's pages.
Twelve pages.
Chevalier d'honneur: the Comte de Saulx Tavarmes.
An equerry in ordinary: M. Petit de Vievigne.
Quarterly equerries:
Monsieur de Wallans.
„ de Billy.
„ le Chevalier de Vaussay de Beauregard.
„ le Comte de Saint Angel.

Chapel.

A grand almoner: the Bishop Duc de Laon.
A first almoner: the Bishop de Meaux.
Almoner in ordinary: the Abbé de Beaufoil de Saint Aulaire.
Confessor: the Abbé Poupast.
Four quarterly almoners.
An almoner in ordinary.
Four quarterly chaplains.
A chaplain in ordinary.
Chapel boys.
Four quarterly chapel boys.
A chapel boy in ordinary.
Two chapel summoners.
There were besides a great number of offices, especially for the table, such as esquire of the table, chief butler, head of the butlery officers, etc. But they had no opportunity of serving directly about the Queen.

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The Queen had twelve footmen.

The Versailles almanac and old catalogues enumerate all the inferior offices.

PARTICULARS OF ETIQUETTE.

The Queen's manner of living and the arrangement of her time.

When the King slept in the Queen's apartment he always rose before her; the exact hour was communicated to the head *femme de chambre*, who entered, preceded by a servant of the bed-chamber bearing a taper; she crossed the room and unbolted the door which separated the Queen's apartment from that of the King. She there found the first *valet de chambre* for the quarter, and a servant of the chamber. They entered, opened the bed curtains on the King's side, and presented him slippers generally, as well as the dressing-gown, which he put on, of gold or silver stuff. The first *valet de chambre* took down a short sword which was always laid within the railing on the King's side. When the King slept with the Queen, this sword was brought upon the armchair appropriated to the King, and which was placed near the Queen's bed, within the gilt railing which surrounded the bed. The first *femme de chambre* conducted the King to the door, bolted it again, and leaving the Queen's chamber did not return until the hour appointed by her Majesty the evening before. At night the Queen went to bed before the King; the first *femme de chambre* remained seated at the foot of her bed until the arrival of his Majesty, in order, as in the morning, to see the King's attendants out and bolt the door after them. The Queen awoke habitually at eight o'clock, and breakfasted at nine, frequently in bed, and sometimes after she had risen, at a small table placed opposite her couch.

In order to describe the Queen's private service intelligibly, it must be recollected that *service* of every kind

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was *honour*, and had not any other denomination. *To do the honours of the service*, was to present the service to a person of superior rank, who happened to arrive at the moment it was about to be performed: thus supposing the Queen asked for a glass of water, the servant of the chamber handed to the first woman a silver gilt waiter, upon which were placed a covered goblet and a small decanter; but should the lady of honour come in, the first woman was obliged to present the waiter to her, and if Madame or the Comtesse d'Artois came in at the moment the waiter went again from the lady of honour into the hands of the Princess before it reached the Queen. It must be observed, however, that if a Princess of the blood instead of a Princess of the family, entered, the service went directly from the first woman to the Princess of the blood, the lady of honour being excused from transferring to any but Princesses of the royal family. Nothing was presented directly to the Queen; her handkerchief or her gloves were placed upon a long salver of gold or silver gilt, which was placed as a piece of furniture of ceremony upon a side-table, and was called a *gantière*. The first woman presented to her in this manner all that she asked for unless the tirewoman, the lady of honour, or a Princess were present, and then the gradation pointed out in the instance of the glass of water was always observed.

Whether the Queen breakfasted in bed or up, those entitled to the *petites entrées* were equally admitted; this privilege belonged of right to her chief physician, chief surgeon, physician in ordinary, reader, closet secretary, the King's four first *valets de chambre* and their reversioners, and the King's chief physicians and surgeons. There were frequently from ten to twelve persons at this first *entrée*. The lady of honour or the superintendant, if present, placed the breakfast equipage upon the bed: the Princesse de Lamballe frequently performed that office.

As soon as the Queen rose the wardrobe woman was admitted to take away the pillows and prepare the bed to be made by some of the *valets de chambre*. She

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undrew the curtains, and the bed was not generally made until the Queen was gone to mass. Generally, excepting at Saint Cloud, where the Queen bathed in an apartment below her own, a slipper bath was rolled into her room, and her bathers brought everything that was necessary for the bath. The Queen bathed in a large gown of English flannel buttoned down to the bottom; its sleeves throughout, as well as the collar, were lined with linen. When she came out of the bath the first woman held up a cloth to conceal her entirely from the sight of her women, and then threw it over her shoulders. The bathers wrapped her in it and dried her completely, she then put on a long and wide open chemise, entirely trimmed with lace, and afterwards a white taffety bed-gown. The wardrobe woman warmed the bed; the slippers were of dimity, trimmed with lace. Thus dressed the Queen went to bed again, and the bathers and servants of the chamber took away the bathing apparatus. The Queen, replaced in bed, took a book or her tapestry work. On her bathing mornings she breakfasted in the bath. The tray was placed on the cover of the bath. These minute details are given here only to do justice to the Queen's scrupulous modesty. Her temperance was equally remarkable; she breakfasted on coffee or chocolate; at dinner ate nothing but white meat, drank water only, and supped on broth, a wing of a fowl, and small biscuits, which she soaked in a glass of water.

The public toilette took place at noon. The toilette table was drawn forward into the middle of the room. This piece of furniture was generally the richest and most ornamented of all in the apartment of the Princesses. The Queen used it in the same manner and place for undressing herself in the evening. She went to bed in corsets trimmed with ribbon, and sleeves trimmed with lace, and wore a large neck handkerchief. The Queen's combing cloth was presented by her first woman if she was alone at the commencement of the toilette; or, as well as the other articles, by the ladies of honour if they were

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come. At noon the women who had been in attendance four-and-twenty hours were relieved by two women in full dress; the first woman went also to dress herself. The *grandes entrées* were admitted during the toilette; sofas were placed in circles for the superintendant, the ladies of honour, and tirewomen, and the governess of the children of France when she came there; the duties of the ladies of the bed-chamber having nothing to do with any kind of domestic or private functions, did not begin until the hour of going out to mass—they waited in the great closet, and entered when the toilette was over. The Princes of the blood, captains of the Guards, and all great officers having the entry paid their court at the hour of the toilette. The Queen saluted by nodding her head or bending her body, or leaning upon her toilette table as if moving to rise; the last mode of salutation was for the Princes of the blood. The King's brothers also came very generally to pay their respects to her Majesty while her hair was being dressed. In the earlier years of the reign the first part of the dressing was performed in the bed-chamber and according to the laws of etiquette—that is to say, the lady of honour put on the chemise and poured out the water for the hands, the tirewoman put on the skirt of the gown or full dress, adjusted the handkerchief, and tied on the necklace. But when the young Queen became more seriously devoted to fashion, and the head-dress attained so extravagant a height that it became necessary to put on the chemise from below,—when, in short, she determined to have her milliner, Mademoiselle Bertin, with her whilst she was dressing, whom the ladies would have refused to admit to any share in the honour of attending on the Queen, the dressing in the bed-chamber was discontinued, and the Queen, leaving her toilette, withdrew into her closet to dress.

On returning into her chamber the Queen, standing about the middle of it, surrounded by the superintendant, the ladies of honour and tirewomen, her ladies of the palace, the *chevalier d'honneur*, the chief equerry, her

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clergy ready to attend her to mass, the Princesses of the royal family who happened to come, accompanied by all their chief attendants and ladies, passed in order into the gallery as in going to mass. The Queen's signatures were generally given at the moment of entry into the chamber. The secretary for orders presented the pen. Presentations of colonels on taking leave were usually made at this time. Those of ladies, and such as had a right to the tabouret, or sitting in the royal presence, were made on Sunday evenings before card-playing began, on their coming in from paying their respects. Ambassadors were introduced to the Queen on Tuesday mornings, accompanied by the introducer of ambassadors on duty, and by M. de Sequeville, the secretary for the ambassadors. The introducer in waiting usually came to the Queen at her toilette to apprize her of the presentations of foreigners which would be made. The usher of the chamber, stationed at the entrance, opened the folding doors to none but the Princes and Princesses of the royal family, and announced them aloud. Quitting his post, he came forward to name to the lady of honour the persons who came to be presented, or who came to take leave; that lady again named them to the Queen at the moment they saluted her; if she and the tirewoman were absent, the first woman took the place and did that duty. The ladies of the bed-chamber, chosen solely as companions for the Queen, had no domestic duties to fulfil, however opinion might dignify such offices. The King's letter in appointing them, among other instructions of etiquette, ran thus: "Having chosen you to bear the Queen company." There were hardly any emoluments accruing from this place.

The Queen heard mass with the King in the tribune, facing the grand altar, and the choir, with the exception of the days of high ceremony, when their chairs were placed below upon velvet carpets fringed with gold. These days were marked by the name of *grand chapel days*.

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The Queen named the collector beforehand, and informed her of it through her lady of honour, who was besides desired to send the purse to her. The collectors were almost always chosen from among those who had been recently presented. After returning from mass the Queen dined every Sunday with the King only, in public in the cabinet of the nobility, a room leading to her chamber. Titled ladies having the honours sat during the dinner upon folding-chairs placed on each side of the table. Ladies without titles stood round the table; the captain of the Guards and the first gentleman of the chamber were behind the King's chair; behind that of the Queen were her first *maître d'hôtel*, her *chevalier d'honneur*, and the chief equerry. The Queen's *maître d'hôtel* was furnished with a large staff, six or seven feet in length, ornamented with golden *fleurs de lis*, and surmounted by *fleurs de lis* in the form of a crown. He entered the room with this badge of his office to announce that the Queen was served. The comptroller put into his hands the card of the dinner; in the absence of the *maître d'hôtel* he presented it to the Queen himself, otherwise he only did him the honours of the service. The *maître d'hôtel* did not leave his place, he merely gave the orders for serving up and removing; the comptroller and gentlemen serving placed the various dishes upon the table, receiving them from the inferior servants.

The Prince nearest to the Crown presented water to wash the King's hands at the moment he placed himself at table, and a Princess did the same service to the Queen.

The table service was formerly performed for the Queen by the lady of honour and four women in full dress; this part of the women's service was transferred to them on the suppression of the office of maids of honour. The Queen put an end to this etiquette in the first year of her reign. When the dinner was over the Queen returned without the King to her apartment with her women, and took off her hoop and train.

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THE QUEEN'S PRIVY PURSE.

Manner of Managing the Funds.

The first women served by the month, and gave the accounts of the privy purse to the Queen herself at the end of every month; after having examined them, the Queen wrote at the bottom of the last page: "Found correct —*Marie Antoinette.*" Each of the first women carried home her account thus audited, leaving in the office of their apartments in the Château the receipts for the pensions or other matters which she had paid during her month's service. In the same office was a statement of the pensions. It was taken away on the 10th of August, and probably mixed with a number of other things carried to the commune of Paris. The Assembly having decreed that charitable pensions should be continued, and not finding the statement of them, passed another decree, authorising the pensioners to demand certificates from the officers or sub-officers of the Queen's chambers; as there was no longer in France either superintendant or lady of honour, the first *femmes de chambre* were, after the abolition of royalty, authorised to give these certificates. The supply for the privy purse was handed over on the first of every month to the Queen. M. Randon de la Tour presented her this sum at noon, the hour of her toilette; it was always in gold, and contained in a white leather purse lined with taffety and embroidered with silver. The funds of the privy purse amounted to three hundred thousand livres; the monthly divisions of them were not equal—the January purse was the richest, those which corresponded in point of time with the fairs of Saint Germain and Saint Laurent were also richer than the others. This was an ancient etiquette, arising from a custom which was formerly in use for the Kings to present the Queens with money, to enable them to make purchases at the fairs. This sum of three hundred thou-

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sand livres was merely play money for the Queen, or for acts of beneficence, or any presents she might be desirous of making. Her toilette was furnished from other sources, even to her rouge and gloves. The Queen retained all the old pensioners of Maria Leczinska, the wife of Louis XV. She paid out of her three hundred thousand livres the amount of eighty thousand livres annually in pensions or alms, and saved out of the rest. Every month the first woman put away two or three hundred louis, which had not been spent, in a strong chest in the Queen's inner closet. Out of these savings the Queen, in the course of several years, paid for a pair of earrings formed of pear-shaped diamonds of equal size, and a single diamond, which she bought of Bœhmer the jeweller in 1774. They were not completely paid for until 1780. Having seen that the young Queen took so much time to discharge out of her savings a debt she had contracted for an article that had tempted her, and which she did not like to make the public money pay for, Bœhmer ought never to have lent himself to the belief that eight or ten years afterwards she would, without the King's knowledge, have purchased an ornament at fifteen hundred thousand livres.[1] But the desire to dispose of so expensive an article as the famous necklace, and the hope of being paid in some way or other, induced him to believe that which he ought not to have thought even probable. The Queen had more than one hundred and ten thousand livres in gold in her apartment at the Tuileries a few days before the 10th of August; deceived by an artful fellow, who called himself the friend of Pétion, and promised to interest him for the King in case of any attack upon the Tuileries, she preserved but fifteen hundred louis in gold, which were conveyed to the Assembly on the taking of the Tuileries. She had changed eighty and some odd thousands into assignats to make up a sum of one hundred thousand francs, which was to be remitted to the mayor.

[1] See vol. ii. pp. 1-29, and Appendix.

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It was agreed that Pétion should make a private signal on seeing the King on the 9th of August; but he did not make it, and this circumstance, and still more his conduct on the disastrous 10th, produced a conviction that the so-called messenger was a mere thief.

The Queen's privy purse being thus prudently administered, and having always exceeded her wants, and as she had even made some investments of money, it is not difficult to give credit to an important truth—namely, that she never drew any extraordinary sum from the public treasury. She was, however, unjustly accused of having done so in all the provinces, and even in Paris, where people most distinguished for rank and education adopt and promulgate opinions unfavourable to the great with unaccountable levity.

The expenses of the Queen's household were controlled by the Secretary of State, to whom the department of the King's household belonged.

The first office was that of the secretariat for orders, in which were made out the brevets or titles of nomination of all the officers and ladies belonging to the establishment, and the original accounts known by the name of *menus* for the regulation of the expenses.

The general estimate included the supplies of bread, wine, meat, wood, wax, etc., and the divers accounts comprised under this general head formed a sort of imaginary estimate of expenditure; for instance, the bread, the wine, and the different dishes for the table were all specified, as well as the wood, and charcoal, and everything else that was necessary for consumption in the household. The nature of the articles might be, and was, varied, but the expenditure remained the same, unless it might be in the balance. By this means the expense of every article was so known and fixed before its consumption as not to allow of its being exceeded. Sometimes, however, articles were required, the expense of which had not been foreseen, as some novelty, or anything unusually rare or ex-

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pensive. A separate account was kept of such things and the expense of them was defrayed out of the amounts saved.

The expenses of the chamber and of the stable department were provided for in the same manner by provisional estimates, which regulated the charges for liveries, equipages, and corn and hay for the horses.

For any unexpected expenses special accounts were made out, which were easily examined, as they consisted of very few articles.

These accounts or estimates fixed the emoluments of every one attached to the household or connected with its supplies.

The second office, that of comptroller-general, carried into execution the orders made out from these estimates and audited the execution of the whole of the service, and of the use of the funds assigned for the estimates, and of the balances when the expenses were not incurred.

This office was, in fact, the central bureau which decided and limited all the expenses, ordinary and extraordinary.

The expenses of the bed-chamber were under the regulation of the lady superintendant of the *dame d'honneur* and the comptroller-general of the household.

Those of the household comprehending the kitchen and offices were regulated by the first *maître d'hôtel*, the other *maîtres d'hôtel*, and the comptroller-general.

Those of the stables by the first equerry and the comptroller-general.

By these regulations the comptroller-general became especially responsible for all that occurred.

Measures of economy were deemed advisable; and it was thought necessary to deprive the grand officers of the part assigned them in the administration of the expenses. A new office was created in consequence under the name of commissariat-general, presided over by the comptroller-general, the minister of the King's household, and the different commissioners in the service of the King and Queen.

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The Queen's household only retained this new form two years, the original officers demanding the restoration of their ancient rights at the end of that time.

The right which the grand officers had of making out expenses which they had the power of respectively influencing for their own interest or that of their dependents, sometimes for their old servants and always for their *protégés*, must certainly be regarded as an abuse. The chief officers had each a secretary paid by the Queen. These secretaries had no other employment than to receive the oaths which were taken before the chief officers. The secretary of the Queen's tirewoman had somewhat more to do, as that lady managed her own accounts, which she might almost be said to farm, having fixed prices for all the clothes of her Majesty.

The different duties were fulfilled by the officers in waiting, serving, some for three months together, some for six, and others in ordinary.

The Queen's council was merely nominal. The lady superintendant and a chancellor were at its head. It sometimes met to receive accounts from the treasurer, but only as a matter of form.

The Queen had a chapel consisting of a grand, and first, and many other almoners; clerks of the chapel, chaplains, preachers, and *sommiers*, serving as above stated, some quarterly and others half-yearly.

The Queen had also several physicians attached to her household to attend on her own person, and likewise on those around her. These different establishments were paid from the funds of the household.

The lady superintendant and the lady of honour presided over the bed-chamber. There were attached to it twelve *dames du palais;* a *chevalier d'honneur*, gentlemen-in-waiting, and a train-bearer.

The establishment of the bed-chamber consisted of two first *femmes de chambre* and twelve others; ushers of the bed-chamber, of the closet, and of the antechamber; of valets, footmen, and other servants of an inferior description.

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It is undeniable that so many persons, the greater part of whom were unknown, must have encumbered the service, rather than have been any honour to it. It may likewise be observed that the privilege of the officers to serve by three months at a time, leaving every individual at liberty to go into his province as soon as his quarter was expired, estranged him too much from the personage to whom he was attached, and rendered it easy for him or her to magnify their own importance. Officers in ordinary, consequently known, in sufficient number, would have rendered the duty more agreeable and more lucrative to those who might discharge it. Similar offices, which the nominal holders sell, are not increased without inconvenience; for it is evident that through this practice many a man holds a post which would never have been assigned to him if it had not been necessary to pay for it. Even when serving by commission all who approach the King ought to be sworn, nor should this oath be regarded as a mere ceremony. Those whose offices are honourable ought to take it before their royal master himself, and inferiors before their respective principals.

The stables are a department of the first importance, as well on account of the dignity as the expense connected with it.

The Queen's stables were governed by the first equerry, having as second an equerry *cavalcadour*. There were twelve pages. They did not receive any salary, but their board and maintenance and education, which was a military one, were all provided for. The outriders, coachmen, postilions, etc., were under the direction of the first equerry; they wore liveries, and their expenses, like those of the bed-chamber and tables, were regulated by the lists of direction for the Queen's household, as were also the keeping and replacing of the horses; by which means the whole expenditure, or at least the greater part of it, was known beforehand, which enabled the comptroller-general to manage with ease all the usual expenses, and gave

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him the means of meeting more readily any which might not have been foreseen.

Many supplies were purchased by tender at the lowest price offered; as, for instance, bread, wine, meat, and fish for the table, and in general every article purveyed.

It may finally be remarked that the registers and papers of the office of comptroller-general of the Queen's household were deposited among the archives of the prefecture of the department at Versailles.

Records of the Household of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette.

It may be interesting to supplement this account of Court offices and duties by some passages from the reminiscences of one who held office during the last years of the monarchy; the simplicity of his narrative seems to attest its veracity, and its somewhat gossiping minuteness serves to complete the picture of the times. The writer, Charles Alexandre François Felix, Comte d'Hézecques, Baron de Mailly, was born in 1774 at the Castle of Radinghem, in Artois. In his twelfth year he became a page of the King's chamber. In 1790 he was placed on the list of Court equerries, and on his retirement in the following year the King gave him a commission in the guards. At that time the Body Guard and the greater part of the nobility had emigrated, and D'Hézecques joined them at Coblentz and took part in the campaigns of 1792 and 1794. Many years of exile followed, till, in 1804, he re-entered the French army under the new flag; he commanded the legion of the Somme in 1813 and 1814, and died in August 1835, leaving behind him the *Recollections of an Émigré*, in addition to the work from which the following extracts are taken.[1]

[1] *Recollections of a Page at the Court of Louis XVI.* By Felix, Comte d'Hézecques. Edited from the French by C. M. Yonge. Hurst & Blackett, 1873.

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The Pages.

The pages of the chamber were eight in number. Their service was entirely within the Château, and did not require height or strength; so it was undertaken at a very early age, and I have known some who began at nine years old. Two governors and a tutor had the task of superintending their education; and, thanks to their small number, this education was much superior to that given to the pages of the stable, which, I must say, left much to be desired.

Formerly the first gentlemen of the bed-chamber had the direction of the pages; each of them had six, who only served for one year. But in 1781 the number of pages was reduced to eight, and they were made permanent; and instead of giving them lodgings as before in the hôtels of the first gentlemen to whom they were attached, a special lodging was assigned to them in the Rue de l'Orangerie. To be received as page it was necessary to prove at least two hundred years of direct noble descent, and to have an allowance of six hundred livres for minor expenses. Then the parents were delivered from any further care; clothing, food, masters, attendance in sickness, all were furnished with truly royal magnificence. One dress alone for a page of the chamber cost fifteen hundred livres, for it was of crimson velvet, with gold embroidery on all the seams. The hat was trimmed with a feather and a broad piece of point d'Espagne. They had, besides, an undress suit of scarlet cloth, with gold and silver lace. The service of the pages of the chamber consisted in being present at the grand *levée* of the King, going to mass with him, lighting him on returning from hunting, and attending his *coucher* to give him his slippers, when the servants of the chamber had removed his stockings. It was certainly quite unique to make two children sit up to hand slippers.

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The economical spirit of Cardinal de Brienne did not overlook the pages. Forty pages of the private stable and two of the chase disappeared from Versailles. There was only the great stable left, and its fifty pages had to perform the whole service of the Court, even that of the pages of the chamber, who did not escape overthrow, though their number was so small, and we were all so young that we were transferred to the grand stable.

I should find it very hard to describe this noisy collection properly, and to characterise the kind of government that obtained among them. The authority of the elders over the new ones made it a kind of oligarchy; but the harshness of this authority, the profound submission required to be shown, made it approach to a despotism, while the licence that reigned among the members of this young society, and the slight respect they professed for the governor, gave it the appearance of a republic, if not of complete anarchy. So our education came to nothing, though there were numbers of masters and professors. It was a bad thing for any one who went there without a taste for self-instruction. He would leave a good dancer, a good fencer, a good rider, but with less morals and plenty of ignorance. A little compensation for these evils was to be found in an excellent temper, rendered docile by the severe education the juniors received from the seniors.

All the right side of the great stable was taken up with our lodgings; on the ground floor there was a very pretty chapel, a great hall for exercise, the offices, the kitchens, and the dining-room, with two billiard tables. This last room was vast and dark, its massive vault rested on four pillars, it was lighted by lamps, and must, by its appearance and still more by the noise that was made there, have resembled the cavern of Gil Blas. At least there was equally good cheer there. We were divided between four tables, and the King allowed the steward eighty thousand francs a year for food, light, and the fire in three or four stoves. On the first floor in equal rank,

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in an enormous gallery, were ranged the fifty chambers where we slept, all painted yellow and varnished, and furnished uniformly. At the end of the gallery a great hall, well warmed, served for a study. The two under-governors, the preceptor, and the almoner had their rooms in the garrets, and the linen was kept there also. Our library was situated there, and was open for two hours a day for changing books and reading the public papers. There were also a collection of maps, objects for drawing from, and scientific instruments. The pages of the State stable wore the King's livery as their uniform, blue coats faced with crimson and white silk lace. But eighteen of them, chosen by the grand equerry, who had to superintend the supply of horses, had blue coats with gold lace, red waistcoats and breeches. Whether the pockets went across or upright marked the difference of the great and lesser stables. Two of them always went before the Princesses when they went out, with a third, one of those with the lace, and who was called a *surtout*, to bear the train of the dress; they rode as the escort when the Princesses went out in the carriage.

When the King went out shooting all the *surtouts* had to be at the meet. They took off their coats, and put on little vests of blue drill and leather gaiters, and each bearing a gun, they kept behind the Prince, who, after firing, took another gun while the empty one was passed from hand to hand to the armourer to load. Meanwhile, the first page had the game picked up, and kept an exact account in a little note-book; and as soon as the sport was over he went to the King's study to take orders for its distribution. This was a very pleasant post; besides the advantage of having a special work to do for the King, like a little minister, the first page got a good many birds for himself, as Louis XVI., every day that he went out, killed some four or five hundred head. We also received a dozen bottles of champagne on these occasions.

With the army, the pages became aides-de-camp to

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the aides-de-camp of the King. They also carried the King's armour, while it was still the fashion to wear a cuirass. Every page leaving the service after three or four years had the right to choose a sub-lieutenancy in any corps; and the leading pages of the King's chamber, of the stables, and of the Queen had a troop of cavalry and a sword.

At home the gradation of pages was by three degrees, the seniors having, after two years, absolute power over the fresh boys; those in the second year were a sort of hybrids, called *sémis*, who were not under orders, neither could give them, but if they behaved badly in the least thing to the seniors, order was given to the fresh boys to hold them under eight taps that delivered a large flow of water into a marble basin in the dining-room. The first year was passed in the novitiate of a fresh boy, and a very severe novitiate it was. Not one of the names used in a college was employed among us. The words passages, refectories, classes, were scrupulously exchanged for corridors, halls of study, etc.; to mention the others would have been to endanger one's peace; and a fresh boy who called his comrade his "school-fellow," was called by that nickname all the time he was in the service. Many people were displeased at this severity of the seniors towards the fresh boys, and thought it cruel. In truth, it was sometimes carried to excess; but when exercised with moderation, as I saw it, the effect was very good. A page never entered a regiment without being well thought of, and a general favourite.

Mass was said in the chapel every day, and two Capuchins of the convent of Meudon had the duty of preaching and the direction of our consciences. Good heavens! what consciences! But though there was no great desire to confide the peccadilloes that had been perpetrated, there was a good deal more to hear the lectures one of them gave us,—Father Chrysologus, a celebrated astronomer, whose works are now published under his real name—M. de Gy. The mornings were

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employed in the riding-school, when all the pages of Versailles attended. It was the most famous in Europe, both for the beauty of the horses and the skill of the riding-masters. When I came, these horses were two hundred and forty in number, but they were afterwards reduced to one hundred. They were all very handsome, and were used on State occasions. Intractable by nature, not much used to the sun, excited by the noise, they often reduced their riders to desperation. For their common work the pages had a set of twenty or thirty light speedy horses. I should think that before any retrenchment took place the number of the King's horses must have amounted to three thousand. The Master of the Horse in France was Charles de Lorraine, with the French title of Prince de Lambesc. His family was not recognised as royal, and he was not allowed the title of Highness. The Prince de Lambesc became a general in the Austrian service; he was a good soldier, firm, even harsh, but not the least cruel, as the Revolutionists tried to make him out. He was one of the best riders in France. At five o'clock in the morning, even in winter, he was at the riding-school, having it lighted up, breaking or teaching horses, and giving lessons. After the office of constable was abolished, the Master of the Horse performed the duties. He then wore a dress of cloth of gold, and carried the King's sword in a scabbard of violet set with golden *fleurs de lis*.

The Queen's pages, twelve in number, were clothed in red with gold lace. Monsieur and the Comte d'Artois each had four pages of the chamber, and twelve of the stable, and their wives eight. Those of Monsieur and Madame were in red and gold. The pages of the chamber were dressed in embroidered velvet; when the colours were the same the difference was shown by the pattern of the lace. All these pages also had their governors and masters for mathematics, German, drawing, dancing, fencing, vaulting, athletics, and knowledge of horses, like us. A surgeon who

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lived in the Rue de Chenil had a contract to take in the pages of the grand stable when they were ill. As it was very comfortable there, they went into the infirmary on the slightest pretext. The King paid five francs a day for each page, and the prescriptions of our doctors came from the Court apothecary.

In the winter of 1790 a dispute arose between the King's and the Prince's pages. It was agreed to let the time of the carnival pass, not to interfere with the pleasures of that period, and that a meeting should take place on Ash Wednesday at the Porte Saint Antoine, under pretence of a game of prisoner's base on the road to Marly, when each should measure himself against his chosen antagonist. The meeting took place on the appointed day. Two or three had been wounded when M. de Lambesse, page to the Comtesse d'Artois, afterwards known by the name of Golden Branch in the Chouan war, was so dangerously run through the lungs by M. de Montlezun that there was nothing to be done but carry him back to Versailles, where he was bled seventeen times. The affair got wind, the governors met, and peace was restored.

The Body Guards.

In 1786 the interior defence of the Court was composed of the Body Guards alone, with a company of a hundred Swiss, and a company of Guards of the Gate. I do not include the French and Swiss guards, as they might be considered a garrison, and their duty lay outside the Palace. The Body Guards were about 1300. They were relieved every quarter, and during their three months they spent in turn one week at the Château, one at the lodge for hunting, and the third at liberty. To be received into the Body Guards it was necessary to be of a good stature, and also to be of noble birth. But this latter condition was not quite so strictly required, for the nobles preferred the army to the Body Guards, as these were only privates

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in laced coats. The greater number of privates were furnished by the poorer nobles, especially from the southern provinces, but by no means the larger proportion of officers, for their posts were very much sought after.

The corps was dressed in blue, with red breeches and stockings, all laced with silver. It was a splendid corps, with its rich uniform and handsome men and horses ; and when the King reviewed them every four years in the plain of the Trou d'Enfer, the sight was really incomparable.

At the Château the duty of the Body Guards was to stand sentry at the doors of the apartments, to turn out under arms when the Princes passed, to line the chapel during mass, and escort the dinners of the royal family. They had to know dukes and peers, for when they passed the sentry had to shoulder arms and stamp twice with the right heel. The Guards were divided between four halls in the Château : the principal guard-room was at the top of the marble staircase,—the sentries on the Princes' apartments were posted thence ; the second, which opened into the first, was the Queen's guard-room, the third the Dauphin's, and the fourth was on the ground floor to the right of the Marble Court, near the little staircase, by which the King came in from hunting.

One of the four companies that composed the Body Guards was called Scotch from the country where it was first raised ; it had held this post of honour from the time of Charles VII., who had engaged some men of that nation in his service. They wore silver and white cross-belts, and their headquarters were at Beauvais. The others bore the names of their captains, and were—the Company of Villeroy, with green cross-belts, headquarters at Châlons-sur-Marne, Captains the Duc de Villeroy and the Duc de Guiche ; the Company of Noailles, blue cross-belts, headquarters at Troyes, Captain the Prince de Poix ; and lastly, the Company of Luxembourg, yellow cross-belts, headquarters Amiens, commanded by the Prince de Luxembourg. The Scotch company was commanded by the Duc d'Ayen.

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The duties of captains of the Guards were among the best at Court. During their quarter they answered for the safety of the King's person, and after the attempt of Damiens to assassinate Louis XV. the captain on duty had, as a matter of form, to apply to the Parliament for letters of pardon. After this had taken place a hedge of Swiss guards fenced the King's carriage when he entered it. The moment the King left his rooms he was always followed by a captain of the Guards, who was bound never to lose sight of him, or allow himself to be separated from him except in a *défilé*, where custom required the equerry to go first, to give assistance in case of need. Several of these officers accompanied the King when he went to mass, and a sub-lieutenant commanded the picquet that followed the King's carriage.

I must say that the Body Guards were always very insubordinate to their chiefs. Their valour was sometimes forgotten in their murmurs and quarrels about the honours due to them. At the beginning of the Revolution they were the first to give a specimen of mutiny by going tumultuously to demand the restoration of a sergeant discharged for having presented a seditious memorial against the duties performed by the Guards.

Eight Guards of the Scotch company had the title of Guards of the Sleeve, and two were on duty every day, sticking to the King's sleeve in public. Their orders were never for an instant to lose sight of the King's person ; and it might be said that nothing but the lid of the coffin could come between, for they had to place him in it and lower the corpse at Saint Denis.

When Louis XI. renewed the treaties, signed by his father Charles VII., with his "good gossips" the Swiss, he was desirous of keeping a hundred of them about his person. This was the beginning of the company of *Cent Suisses*, and they always were some of the handsomest men of the regiment of the Swiss guards. Faithful to their manners and customs on days of ceremony, they still wore the antique dress of the liberators of

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Switzerland ; the large slashed breeches, the doublet, starched ruff, and plumed cap. This company was commanded by the brave Duc de Brissac, who was murdered at Versailles in the month of September 1792, among the prisoners from Orleans.

The Guards of the Gate really guarded the chief gate of the Palace by day alone. They never opened it till the time appointed for the King's *levée*, generally half-past eleven. They had also to know who had the right of bringing their carriages into the court. This favour was known by the name of the Honours of the Louvre, and was confined to princes, marshals of France, and ambassadors. M. de Vergennes was captain of this company, and they were dressed like the Body Guards, except the lace, which was half gold and half silver. There were also two weak companies of gendarmes and of light horse ; one in red and black, the other in red and white, with gold lace. The first was commanded by the Prince de Soubise, the other by the Duc de Aiguillon.

The Marquis de Sourches, grand provost of the hôtel, commanded a company of guards, who performed the police duties. In addition to these measures of precaution the Swiss of the Château patrolled its many dark winding mazes; they were accompanied by spaniel dogs, trained to search all the corners, to see if any one was concealed in them. Every Sunday the regiment of French guards in garrison at Paris, and that of Swiss guards in barracks at Rueil and Courbevoie, sent a strong detachment to Versailles. They took charge of the external defence, and when the King went out they paraded in the Minister's Court.

Monsieur and the Comte d'Artois also, each of them, had two companies of Body Guards and one of Swiss for their rooms. The guards of Monsieur were in red, those of the Comte d'Artois in green. These guards never bore arms except in the apartments of their Princes.

Nothing less than the whole vigour of the old Maréchal de Biron could have maintained the exact discipline

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to which he reduced the regiment of French guards. His successor, the Duc de Châtelet, who was not without a certain spirit of order, left the regiment exposed to all the seductions that quarters like Paris could offer. And so this corps was the first to desert their King on the 14th of July. Those who were at Versailles held out a few days longer, but one morning they deserted their posts, and the regiment of Flanders was brought up to occupy them.

The Levée—The Chapel—Notre Dame—The Grand Couvert—Deputations—The Queen's Balls.

Although the hall of the Œil de Bœuf was very large, there were days when it could hardly contain the crowd of courtiers who attended the King's *levée*. Some benches, and three or four pictures by Paul Veronese, were all the furniture. At last all were in attendance; half-past eleven struck. A few minutes later the King came out of his private apartments in morning dress and entered the room of ceremony. A servant appeared at the door and cried, "Wardrobe! gentlemen!" Then entered the Princes of the blood, the great officers of the Crown, and the gentlemen who had the privilege of the great *entrées*, among them any of the King's tutors in youth. When the King had nothing but his coat to put on they cried, "The Chamber!" Then all the officers of the chamber entered, the pages, their tutor, the equerries, chaplains, and all the courtiers admitted to the chamber; that is to say, the Œil de Bœuf. When the King was entirely dressed the folding-doors were flung open and all the rest of the officers admitted, with the strangers, visitors properly dressed, and, by custom, the humble author, shyly coming to offer a dedication. Then the King entered the railing around the bed, and, kneeling on a cushion, said a short prayer, with the clergy and chaplains around him; after which he received any petitions, and entered into the council chamber, followed by those who

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had the right of entry. All other persons went into the gallery to await the hour of the King's going out on his way to mass. Louis XVI. never had his hair dressed till he was entirely clothed. It was a curious custom, and, I think, must have been derived from the time when enormous wigs were worn. After his *levée* he went into a dressing-room, where his embroidered clothes were covered with a great gown, and the barber servant, who had prepared the hair on rising, finished the dressing, and added the powder.

Having been spectators of the King's *levée*, let us see what happened at his retiring. It was really his going to bed; but business or a little nap would often make the King late. The monarch arrived; the first gentleman of the chamber received his hat and sword and handed them to an under official. The King commenced a conversation with the courtiers, that was longer or shorter according as he found it pleasant, and was often much too long for our sleepiness and weary legs. After the conversation was finished the King went within the *ruelle*, and knelt with the chaplain-in-waiting alone, who held a long taper-stand of silver gilt, with two tapers, while the Princes could only have one. The chaplain recited the prayer *Quæsumus omnipotens Deus;* and when the prayer was finished the taper-stand was handed to the first servant of the chamber, and he, at the King's orders, gave it to any gentleman he wished to distinguish. This honour was so much appreciated in France that many aspirants could not disguise their disgust if they did not obtain it. Maréchal de Broglie, the conqueror of Bergen, a blue ribbon and marshal of France, covered with glory at forty years old, seemed to feel the deprivation more than any one!

Before Louis XVI. was absorbed by his troubles, bedtime was his time of relaxation and fun. He played tricks on the pages, teased Captain Laroche, and made them tickle an old officer, who was so sensitive that he used to run away for fear of it. When the King came

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home from hunting there was a ceremony for taking off his boots. It was the change of dress that the King made on such occasions, and the customs were much the same as at the *levée*. The King's wardrobe was in a little room looking on a small court behind the marble staircase. The King's coats, garments, and linen were kept there. Every day what was wanted for morning and evening toilette was brought up in great velvet wrappers.

After rising the King often received deputations of Parliament or of provincial estates. On one of these occasions I saw him give a copy of Mirabeau's work on the Court of Berlin to the Advocate-General Séguier, to give more solemn effect to the decree that ordered it to be burnt by the hands of the executioner. And then Prince Henry of Prussia, who was much maligned in the book, said to M. Séguier, "You have some dirt in your hand." "Yes, your Highness," replied the witty magistrate, "but it does not stain."

The chapel of Versailles was in a manner on two floors. The tribune was on the upper story, with a gallery on each side for the accommodation of persons on duty who could not find room in the tribune, as well as strangers. The tribune was very large; in front it was fenced with a marble balustrade, with a great hanging of crimson velvet fringed with gold thrown over it, and at each end was a gilded lantern enclosed with glass, which would hold one person, and was intended for the Princesses if they were ill or desired not to appear in public.

It was only on great feast days that the Court went down to the ground floor of the chapel by two winding stairs at each side of the tribune. A splendid carpet was laid on the floor; a desk and two armchairs were set for the King and Queen. The Princes had chairs and a footstool; all the officers and ladies placed themselves in the rear on stools and benches; lastly, the chaplains and Guards of the Sleeve were on each side of the desk. The King's band played masses and motets by the

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best composers. At the Christmas midnight mass there was the great pleasure of hearing the famous Bezozzi performing little airs on the hautbois, that sounded the more graceful in the quiet night. The King's band had twelve children attached to it, called band pages, who served as falsettoes. They were sons of servants of officers of the Court, and wore the livery of the great stable, with the difference that they could not wear silk stockings or silver buckles.

The Grand Almoner of France was the Cardinal de Montmorency Laval, Bishop of Metz, a proud and haughty prelate, whose name rather than his learning had raised him to the highest dignities of the State. He had succeeded Cardinal de Rohan, Bishop of Strasburg, after the unfortunate affair of the necklace, when the Queen's name had been used by rogues as a means of deceiving a great noble. The Cardinal de Rohan, who was called Prince Louis, was very well preserved when I saw him at the States-General, though he had become afflicted with many diseases in his exile at the Abbey of Chaise-Dieu, and a complaint in the eye, which obliged him to cover it with a piece of black silk. In the time of his grandeur he was the noblest and most magnificent lord at Court.

The Court went to Notre Dame in great state on Corpus Christi Day. The procession commenced after their arrival. A number of clergy, wearing magnificent ornaments and linen tunics of dazzling whiteness, went before the canopy, some singing the praises of God and Holy Canticles, others scattering perfume in the air from their censers at a signal from the master of the ceremonies. A cloud of incense rose to Heaven, and branches of flowers scattered by young Levites covered the path of the Host, borne under a superb canopy trimmed with feathers and brilliant fringes. The Host was followed by all the Court bearing wax tapers. This noble company marched between two ranks of guards and two files of pages bearing torches. After a station at an altar of rest, in a building constructed on purpose at the entrance

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of the Rue Dauphine, the square was crossed between two edges formed of all the royal tapestries. On nearing the Court of the Ministers a military band announced the presence of two regiments of French and Swiss guards. As soon as the canopy appeared all these men of war bent the knee, and the colours were dipped. On Palm Sunday, also, the Court went out with the clergy, bearing long dried branches of palms. There was a gathering at the chapel door to listen to the thundering voice of a chaplain, the Abbé de Ganderatz, who made the arches quiver by singing the verse of the psalm *Attolite Portæ*, as notice to open the doors. It is very rare to meet with so powerful a voice, it made the glass in the windows of the building shake.

The *grand couvert* only took place on days of ceremony, and was also in the Queen's rooms. None but the royal family were admitted, and the Princes of the blood were only admitted on the day of their marriage. The King and Queen had their *ships* or *cadenas* near them—that is, silver-gilt trays containing salt, pepper, napkins, and knives. It will be remembered that one day when Louis XIV. was at his *grand couvert* a packet of gold lace that had been stolen in the chapel was placed on the table before him. In my time a looking-glass maker who cleaned the looking-glasses of the gallery, took the lace off nearly forty window-curtains in broad day.

The King received any deputation from sovereign courts, from the clergy, or from his own kingdom in his bedroom, with his hat on, seated in the armchair. Indeed, very often he remained standing, and nearly all the deputations made their address on their knees. When it was an extraordinary deputation the fountains in the park were set playing, and the members were taken about in little carrioles, with two seats of crimson velvet and gold lace, drawn by the Swiss of the gardens, dressed in cassocks, a livery of the time of Louis XIV., giving them a most grotesque appearance.

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M. de Dreux, Marquis de Brézé, was grand master of ceremonies. On State occasions he wore a cloak of the colour of his dress, and habitually carried a little baton covered with black velvet, with an ivory knob, as a mark of his office. He had to direct all the ceremonies, and keep exact and detailed accounts of them; and his registers were often consulted on unforeseen occasions, or disputes of precedence. The office of master of the ceremonies was created by Henri III. in 1585.

The last of the balls was in 1787. The King gave them to the Queen every Wednesday, from the beginning of the year till Lent. The pages of the chamber had to do the honours, to lead the ladies to their places, offer them refreshments, and again take them to supper, or to their carriages. Strangers were always struck with the sight of these good little managers, most of them with the roses of childhood still on their faces, taking infinite pains, running, calling, hurrying the servants at the refreshment tables, leading out the ladies, without seeming surprised at their magnificence, or wearied with the weight of their splendid dresses.

There was an old theatre in the part of the Chateâu to the right of the royal court, which had been abandoned as too small; the entertainments were held there. Several of the wooden pavilions kept at the Hôtel des Menus Plaisirs were added, that could be set up in a few minutes, ornamented in a few hours, and made movable palaces. The entrance led into a verdant thicket, with statues and rose-bushes, with an open temple at the end, and a billiard-table in it. On the right little alleys led to the rooms for dancing and for play; and one of the doors was filled with a great sheet of unsilvered plate-glass, so transparent that a Swiss had to be posted there to prevent any clumsy people coming through. This was in order that the billiard players might not lose sight of the dance, nor the warmth of this fine room. The ball-room was an oblong, reached by a few descending steps. There was a gallery all round, that allowed room to pass

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between the columns without interference with the dancing. Persons who had not been presented, and were permitted to enter the boxes, were allowed to look on from them, and the pages took care to have refreshments carried there. At the other end of the dancing-room was the refreshment table, and that terminated the view from the card-room. Enormous baskets of fruit and pastry stood between antique urns filled with liquors, whose colour was visible by the reflection of the light. Four marble shells held fountains that flowed all night, and produced a pleasant coolness in the dancing-room.

The dresses were simple and elegant. The gentlemen were in dress clothes, and danced with their plumed hats on their heads, a noble and graceful fashion that I never saw in use except at the Court of France. Several men wore black coats trimmed with jet, and these dresses were very brilliant from the reflection of the lustres in their trimming. A person must have been presented to have the *entrée* to these balls and to dance there. Any one on duty could be present, but could not dance nor sit down to table.

Supper was served at midnight in the old theatre. There were twelve places at each table, and people of the same set kept together. The King's and Queen's footmen waited. The most delicate and costly dishes were provided in plenty. The royal family often had their supper at the ball ; the King never came there till after he had had his supper at nine o'clock in his own rooms. He stayed till one o'clock and went to bed after a game at tric-trac in a little room intended for that amusement. Though Louis XVI. was so good-natured and simple, his rank and his virtues were a little oppressive. He retired early, because he knew that the ball was much gayer and more lively when he was gone. The strictness of the etiquette diminished ; the old young men, whose years were too many for mingling in these pleasures, would then take the liberty of enjoying a country dance, or a " Sir Roger." They could be distinguished by their bare

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heads, for they were not supposed to come for the sake of dancing, and were not dressed accordingly. The Queen, Madame Elizabeth, the Comte d'Artois, and the Duc de Bourbon, who had given up dancing, would do it once in a way for a wonder, and there never had been so much decorum at the Court and at the same time so much bright liveliness.

The Two Trianons—Fontainebleau—Marly—Versailles.

The cost of Petit Trianon has been very much exaggerated. It had been built by Louis XV., and only embellishments introduced by a change of tastes could be set down to the subsequent reign. The house was a square detached block ornamented in the Corinthian style, and too small to afford more than the necessary lodging for a Queen of France. A dining-room, drawing-room, bedroom, and some dressing-rooms composed the first floor; the second only contained some small rooms for Madame Elizabeth and the ladies of the Palace. The furniture was rather elegant than magnificent. The bedroom had muslin hangings, with embroidery and brilliant colours that in their way rivalled the most practised pencil. Some portraits of the children of Maria Theresa reminded the Queen of her family, amongst whom she might have found more happiness, if less splendour. But these pictures must have inspired serious reflections, for all the Princes and Princesses were represented as monks and nuns digging their own graves. The only luxury of the adjoining dressing-room consisted in two looking-glasses that rose out of the floor by a spring, and could darken the room by covering the windows. The famous table that was once in the Château de Choisy was fitted in the dining-room; by means of balance-weights and other mechanism it went down into the lower story to be laid with a fresh course.

One side of the block of Trianon looked over a garden laid out in the taste of Le Nôtre. Orange trees and

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statues alternated in niches of verdure, and adorned a grass plot with a theatre at the end; in front of the house was a lawn, with a rock at the end shaded by pines, cypresses, and larches, and a rustic bridge thrown over the stream. This wild prospect made that on the third side of the house seem more sweet, where the Temple of Love, containing a splendid statue of the god by Bouchardon, stood amid flowers and laurel groves. Near the mansion was a game of roundabout, in a great Chinese pavilion, in which the brightness of the sun's rays was reflected from gold and blue; these Chinese figures seemed to put the machine in motion, but it was really turned by persons concealed in a cellar.

At the end of the garden at Trianon, on the borders of the stream, were a number of cottages, rustic without, but elegant, and even exquisite, within. One of the huts was a dairy, and the cream, contained in China vases, placed on tables of white marble, was kept cool by the stream flowing through the room. Close by was the real farm, where the Queen had a splendid herd of Swiss cows, that grazed in the meadows around. In the midst of the little hamlet stood Marlborough's Tower, commanding the neighbourhood; the exterior stair, bordered with stocks and geraniums, seemed like a garden in the air.

This Trianon was called "le petit" to distinguish it from the Grand Trianon, standing very near, and built by Louis XIV. in Italian taste. It is composed of a ground floor alone, with balustrades and statues above it, forming two wings joined by a great peristyle of columns of red and green marble. . . . I only saw it occupied twice. The first time the body of the youngest daughter of Louis XVI.[1] was placed there; the second time it served as the quarters of the Embassy of Tippoo Sahib. The gardens were large, but presented no noteworthy points except an amphitheatre of turf, with busts of the Roman Emperors, a copy of the Laocoon, and an ancient head of Minerva.

[1] Madame Sophie.

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The Court only made one visit to Fontainebleau while I was at Versailles, and that was in October 1786. It only lasted till November 1 on account of the accident that befell M. de Tourzel, grand provost of the hôtel, who was run away with while hunting with the King, and his head dashed against a pointed branch, that penetrated the skull. The wound was so severe that he could not be taken to the town, but was laid in the house of a gamekeeper until one of the great huts that were always conveyed after the King could be erected in the forest. He only survived for some days, and the visit was shortened by the general sorrow occasioned by his death, almost in the King's presence. The interest the King took in the family of M. de Tourzel was increased by this fatal accident, and no doubt it was an additional reason for the selection of Madame de Tourzel to succeed Madame de Polignac as governess to the children of France.

The visits to Fontainebleau took place in the autumn, to take advantage of the excellent opportunities for sport in the enormous forest, full of beautiful trees, and with rocks really remarkable, as they were found in a nearly flat country. These sequestered glades were a great resort of stags and boars, the former in herds of seventy or eighty. There was a great charm in the Forest of Fontainebleau towards the close of day; the great trees seemed to murmur their ancient recollections in the breeze; the gigantic masses of rock stood out in the twilight, and the stag passed by as quickly as lightning, emitting his hoarse and terrible cry.

The King's lodgings were in the circular part of the court called that of the Donjon. They were reached from that side, or by the Gallery of Francis I., connected with the chapel, and the grand flight of steps of the horse-shoe staircase in the court of the White Horse. I do not remember that these rooms contained anything curious; the furniture was very plain. But I have preserved a recollection of a little dressing-room of the Queen's, furnished in Oriental style and lit by lamps placed in a chamber

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separated from the room by a sheet of glass draped with taffety, the colour of which was often varied, giving a soft and pleasant light.

In the Gallery of the Stags, leading from the Oval Court to that of the Princes, and named from its view of the Wood of Stags, Queen Christina of Sweden ordered the murder of her grand equerry, the Marquis de Monaldeschi. I have seen a little stone in the gallery with a cross and sacred monogram engraved on it, which was placed on the spot where the unfortunate man received his death-blow. The Oval or Donjon Court was separated from the Court of the Fountains by a great portico surmounted by an open dome, under which Louis XIII. was baptized. The anxiety of the people to behold this scion of a beloved King caused Henri IV. to select this place rather than a church.

Marie Antoinette often went to Fontainebleau by water. She embarked at Choisy and ascended the Seine as far as Melun in a splendid yacht, commodious as a large house, with saloons, kitchens, and a quantity of trees in boxes making a sort of garden in it. The "voyages to Fontainebleau" were ultimately put a stop to for economical reasons.

Half-way from Saint Germain to Versailles was the little Château of Marly, at the bottom of a valley; in building it Louis XIV. mocked at the laws of nature. Machines were invented to carry thither the largest trees, roots and all, so that they might be more speedily enjoyed. Work went on day and night; there was an endeavour to perform prodigies. It was necessary to descend a steep hill to reach the château. At the top were two circular buildings and the stables. The main building of the château was a square block with steps all round it. This pavilion was considered the palace of the God of Day, and twelve smaller ones placed round the lawn represented the signs of the zodiac. The frescoes on the walls were of allegorical subjects bearing on this idea. The gardens of Marly, "where the rain does not

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wet," in the words of a courtier of Louis XIV., were full of statues and fountains; at the end of the lawn a great balcony overlooked a horse-pond and the road to Saint Germain; there were the two fine marble horses made by Guillaume Couston, afterwards taken to Paris. Not far from Marly was the famous hydraulic machine invented by the Chevalier de Ville, and constructed by Rennequin Sualem. By a combination of wheels, pumps, and a multitude of pipes and aqueducts, it raised the water five hundred feet, to the arcades of Marly, and fed the fountains in the town of Versailles, as well as the basins in the park—the wonder of strangers. For the time of its construction, in 1682, it was a wonderful work.

Louis XIII. bought the site of a mill on an elevation, and built a small house there for a hunting-box. Louis XIV., fond of the arts, and undeterred by difficulties, selected the spot to make it the abode of Kings; the greater part was finished in less than seven years, and it was inhabited in 1687. The effects of this hasty construction were soon seen; in less than a century after its construction there were apprehensions that it would crumble away in many spots. The foundations had been laid upon made ground, and were not secure; the building was shored up in several places. I saw the beam that supported the alcove in the King's room falling into dust, and if it had not been observed the King might some night have found himself on the ground floor, in the presence of the captain of his guard. A bed was put in the large dressing-room for him, and he slept there for six months. The amount of expense incurred at Versailles was long made a pretext for the war declared against the ancient dynasty. Mirabeau asserts that Maréchal de Belle-Isle stopped in a fright when he had reckoned up to twelve hundred millions. One of the principal faults to be found with the Château is that there is no entrance worthy of the edifice. A multitude of receding angles on the side to the court reduce the front to seven windows, and the only object of this

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arrangement was to preserve the little mansion of Louis XIII. The façade towards the garden is much superior, as the breadth is six hundred yards. The real entrance to the apartments was by the splendid marble staircase; but it is at the side reached by three narrow arcades, and only leads to the King's antechambers, and the way into the gallery is only by a door in the middle, so that the King's rooms were reached without enjoying the beauty of the grand rooms. Those who had not the right to remain in the King's apartments passed at once into the gallery—the finest in Europe—where the pencil of Le Brun portrayed the victories of Louis XIV., and where an immense number of doors of looking-glass repeated in perspective the view from the windows overlooking the garden. In this gallery strangers who came from the farthest parts of France to see the King once in their lives stood to await the moment when, on Sunday, the whole royal family issued from the King's rooms to go to mass, and crossed the eight halls on their way. These halls were named, from the paintings on the ceiling, Diana, Mercury, Mars, etc., and as they were passages rather than rooms, only occupied permanently by the Swiss guards, they had no other ornaments but the pictures, lustres, and gilding. Turning to the right, the first hall was that of Apollo. There was a throne in it under a canopy of crimson damask, but it was never used. In this room there was a glass thermometer fixed in the window, and the King came several times a day to ascertain the temperature; a servant of the Château noted it in his book three times a day. There was a clock in the Hall of Mercury, formerly of much note; at every hour cocks crowed and flapped their wings, Louis XIV. issued from a temple, and Fame, in a cloud, came and crowned him to the sound of a chime. A fine picture of the Queen by Madame Le Brun was placed for a time in the Hall of Mars; she had, with her surprising power of representing texture, portrayed the Queen in a dress of flame-coloured velvet, having her

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second son on her knees, and her eldest girl leaning on her shoulder, while the Dauphin pointed to his little sister asleep in her cradle. The figure of the youngest Princess was effaced after her death; and as her eldest brother soon followed her to the tomb the picture recalled painful remembrances, and was removed.

The Château of Versailles may be compared to an immense labyrinth, from the number of galleries, corridors, staircases, and rooms that it contains. A person needed to be very well used to it to find his way about, and many small towns had not so large a population.

The bedroom of Louis XIV. was entered from the Œil de Bœuf, but in subsequent reigns it became the waiting-room. This great hall was the centre of the Château, and the end of the shabby little court called the Marble Court, with a great balcony over it. Above was placed the real *memento mori*, not, as in Persia, a slave to remind the sovereign of mortality, but a dial with the hand fixed at the hour of the death of the last monarch. Louis XV. died on 11th May 1774, at three o'clock in the afternoon. I have found, by writing to Versailles, that the hand is in the same position as when I went away. Just opposite was the real sleeping-room of the King, with blue furniture and a bed ornamented with feathers, helmets, and gilding. Two magnificent golden candlesticks made by Père Germain were placed on a cabinet; between these two artistic marvels a single plaster figure attracted the looks of that kind father, Louis XVI.—his daughter as an infant, praying; when accidentally broken he had it remodelled. In the middle of the great dressing-room was a small model of the Place Louis XV., and the famous clock of Passemant, seven feet high, which, besides showing the time, displayed the years, months, phases of the moon, and evolutions of the planets. The King always sat up till after midnight on New Year's Eve to see his clock make all its changes. A splendid pot of stocks, made of valuable china, which stood in one of the rooms, was broken by an unlucky visitor. The man

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was short-sighted, and not seeing the glass shade over the vase broke it with his forehead, and the splinters broke the flower into fragments. I mention this little event, for the poor man turned faint and gave his name and address very sorrowfully, fancying that the drawbridge of some fortress would be lowered for him. But Louis XVI. sent to console and relieve him, though the accident cost more than a million crowns. In the King's private library he usually worked at a little bureau placed in the embrasure of the window. His amusement during his work was to look at the people crossing the courts; and visitors might convince themselves by the sight of the books in use lying on the floor and the numbers of papers strewed around, that Louis XVI. did not spend his time in smith's work, in getting drunk, or in beating his servants, as his slanderers pretended.

Anecdotes of the King.

When on his way to hunt the King went out by a stair near the waiting-room of the servants of the Château. There was a guard-room at the bottom, at the entrance to which Louis XV. was struck by Damiens, who had been hidden in a little passage leading to the Court of Stags. The assassins of our day directed their violence more against the Crown than the person of Louis XVI., or that might have been easily reached. Every evening, returning from supper with Madame, he would cross the courts or large dark galleries wrapped in a grey cloak, with an umbrella if it rained, and only accompanied by two servants bearing torches. In the little chambers round the Court of Stags the King had a whole set of geographical maps, plans in relief, models of ships, a little observatory, and the famous forge that public report would have it he was constantly using. I can assert that it looked very much neglected; and after mid-day the King was dressed in a manner that precluded such violent exercise. At any rate, his supposed talent was not always useless; for when a fire broke out in a set of apartments near the

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King's, and the door could not be beaten down, he came to the rescue with his tools and picked the lock soon enough for the fire to be extinguished, though not to save the life of the person in charge—an old woman, who had gone to sleep by the hearth. All these rooms were well lighted but badly warmed, for the King disliked heat. In summer, cloths were spread over the grand balcony of the *levée* room and watered with syringes, and the King would often push some one against them in joke to get a wetting, especially any one who seemed to care much for the extreme elegance of the large *frisure* then in vogue. His constitutional vigour made his proceedings rough, and what he only meant for a small joke would sometimes leave painful traces;[1] but he would have denied himself any amusement if he could have supposed it capable of giving the slightest pain, and during nearly six years at Court I never saw the King in the smallest instance act with intentional rudeness to the humblest of his servants.

His only passion was for hunting, and it was needful for his health. He used himself to select the meets, and kept notes of the stags hunted, of their age, and of the circumstances of their capture.[2] He also very often went out shooting, and although short-sighted shot very well, and often came back with his face blackened with powder. He was a bad rider and wanting in confidence. The Queen, on the other hand, rode on horseback with much elegance and boldness.

During the winter the various companies acting in Paris came to Versailles to wait on the Court. Tuesday was devoted to tragedy, Thursday to comedy, Friday to the comic opera. The grand opera was only performed five or six times each winter. Louis XVI. preferred tragedy or comedy, and attended very constantly; knowing and appreciating all the great poets, and possessed of an

[1] In the Œil de Bœuf there was a shovel so heavy that it took a strong man to hold it out at arm's length. I have often seen the King perform this feat with a little page standing on the shovel as well.

[2] See *ante*, pp. 312-319, "The King's Diary."

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excellent memory, the King there found himself in his element, while from his unmusical ear he was unable to enjoy the opera, and could not help yawning. I never heard any one sing so much out of tune as the poor King. In the Versailles theatre in 1788 I heard a joke that showed how far disrespect for the royal family had already advanced, they being present in a box taken for them. Passiello's opera called "King Theodore at Venice" was going on. In the scene where the King's servant, telling their host of his master's pecuniary embarrassment, several times repeats, "What shall we do?" a voice from the pit replied "Assemble the Notables!"—*Recollections of a Page.*

ROYAL ETIQUETTE.

Madame Campan observes that before the Revolution there were customs and even words in use at Versailles with which few people were acquainted. The King's dinner was called *the King's meat.* Two of the Body Guard accompanied the attendants who carried the dinner; every one rose as they passed through the halls, saying, "There is the King's *meat.*" All precautionary duties were distinguished by the words *in case.* Some chemises and handkerchiefs kept in readiness in a basket in the King's or Queen's apartments, in case their Majesties should wish to change their linen without sending to the wardrobe, constituted the packet *in case.* Their clothes, brought in great baskets, or cloths of green taffety were called the King's or Queen's *ready.* Thus the attendants would ask, "Is the King's *ready* come?" One of the Guards might be heard to say, "I am *in case* in the forest of Saint Germain." In the evening they always brought the Queen a large bowl of broth, a cold roast fowl, one bottle of wine, one of orgeat, one of lemonade, and some other articles, which were called the *in case* for the night. An old medical gentleman, who had been physician in ordinary to Louis XIV., and was still living at the time of

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the marriage of Louis XV., told M. Campan's father an anecdote which seems too remarkable to have remained unknown; nevertheless he was a man of honour, incapable of inventing this story. His name was Lafosse. He said that Louis XIV. was informed that the officers of his table evinced, in the most disdainful and offensive manner, the mortification they felt at being obliged to eat at the table of the comptroller of the kitchen along with Molière, *valet de chambre* to his Majesty, because Molière had performed on the stage; and that this celebrated author consequently declined appearing at that table. Louis XIV., determined to put an end to insults which ought never to have been offered to one of the greatest geniuses of the age, said to him one morning at the hour of his private *levée*, "They say you live very poorly here, Molière; and that the officers of my chamber do not find you good enough to eat with them. Perhaps you are hungry; for my part I awoke with a very good appetite this morning: sit down at this table. Serve up my *in case* for the night there." The King then cutting up his fowl, and ordering Molière to sit down, helped him to a wing, at the same time taking one for himself, and ordered the persons entitled to familiar entrance, that is to say, the most distinguished and favourite people at Court, to be admitted. "You see me," said the King to them, "engaged in entertaining Molière, whom my *valets de chambre* do not consider sufficiently good company for them." From that time Molière never had occasion to appear at the valets' table; the whole Court was forward enough to send him invitations.[1]

[1] Louis XV. also was desirous of encouraging literature; but he was only capable of affording it a cold and supercilious protection, unaccompanied by any demonstration of affability or kindness, and more humiliating than obliging.

In the *Memoirs* of Madame de Hausset, one of Madame de Pompadour's *femmes de chambre*, we meet with the following passage:—

"The King, who admired all that was connected with the age of Louis XIV., recollecting that the Boileaus and Racines had been

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M. de Lafosse used also to relate that a brigade-major of the Body Guard, being ordered to place the company in the little theatre at Versailles, very roughly turned out one of the King's comptrollers who had taken his seat on one of the benches, a place to which his newly-acquired office entitled him. In vain he insisted on his quality and his right. The altercation was ended by the brigade-major in these words—"Gentlemen Body Guards, do your duty." In this case their duty was to take the party and turn him out at the door. This comptroller, who had paid sixty or eighty thousand francs for his place, was a man of a good family, and had had the honour of serving his Majesty five-and-twenty years in one of his regiments; thus disgracefully driven out of the hall, he placed himself in the King's way in the great hall of the Guards, and bowing to his Majesty requested him to vindicate the honour of an old soldier who had wished to end his days in his Prince's civil employment, now that age had obliged him to relinquish his military service. The King stopped, heard his story, and then ordered him to follow him. His Majesty attended the representation in a sort of amphitheatre, in which his armchair was placed; behind him was a row of stools for

protected by him, and that part of the splendour of that reign was attributed to his own, was flattered with the idea that a Voltaire flourished in his own Court; but he feared that author and did not esteem him. He could not, however, help saying, 'I have treated him as well as Louis XIV. behaved to Racine and Boileau; I gave him a place of gentleman in ordinary and a pension, as Louis XIV. did to Racine. If he is presumptuous enough to aim at being a chamberlain, wearing a cross and supping with a King, it is not my fault. It is not the fashion in France; and as there are more wits and great lords here than in Prussia I should have occasion for an immense table to entertain them altogether.' He then counted on his fingers, 'Maupertuis, Fontenelle, La Motte, Voltaire, Piron, Destouches, Montesquieu, Cardinal Polignac.'—'Your Majesty forgets,' said some one, 'D'Alembert and Clairault.' 'And Crébillon,' said he, 'and La Chaussée.' 'Crébillon, the son,' said another, 'who must be more agreeable than his father; and there is the Abbé Prevôt, and the Abbé d'Olivet.' 'Very well,' said the King, 'all these people would have dined or supped with me for the last five-and-twenty years.'"

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the captain of the Guards, the first gentleman of the chamber, and other great officers. The brigade-major was entitled to one of these places; the King stopped opposite the seat which ought to have been occupied by that officer and said to the comptroller, "Take, sir, for this evening, the place near my person of him who has offended you, and let the expression of my displeasure at this unjust affront satisfy you instead of any other reparation."

During the latter years of the reign of Louis XIV. he never went out but in a chair carried by porters, and he showed a great regard for a man of the name of D'Aigremont, one of those porters who always went in front and opened the door of the chair. The slightest preference shown by sovereigns, even to the meanest of their servants, never fails to excite observation.[1] The King had done something for this man's numerous family, and frequently talked to him. An abbé belonging to the chapel thought proper to request D'Aigremont to present a memorial to the King, in which he requested his Majesty to grant him a benefice. Louis XIV. did not approve of the liberty thus taken by his chairman, and said to him, in a very angry tone, "D'Aigremont, you have been made to do a very unbecoming act, and I am sure there must be *simony* in the case."—"No, Sire, there is not the least *ceremony* in the case, I assure you," answered the poor man, in great consternation; "the abbé only said he would give me a hundred louis."—"D'Aigremont," said the King, "I forgive you on account of your ignorance and candour. I will give you the hundred louis out of my privy purse; but I will discharge you the very next time you venture to present a memorial to me."

[1] People of the very first rank did not disdain to descend to the level of D'Aigremont. "Lauzun," says the Duchesse d'Orléans in her *Memoirs*, "sometimes affects stupidity in order to show people their own with impunity, for he is very malicious. In order to make Maréchal Tessé feel the impropriety of his familiarity with people of the common sort, he called out, in the drawing-room at Marly, 'Maréchal, give me a pinch of snuff; some of your best, such as you take in the morning with Monsieur d'Aigremont the chairman.'"—*Note by the Editor.*

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Louis XIV. was very kind to those of his servants who were nearest his person; but the moment he assumed his royal deportment, those who were most accustomed to see him in his domestic character were as much intimidated as if they were appearing in his presence for the first time in their lives. Some of the members of his Majesty's civil household, then called *commensalité*, enjoying the title of equerry, and the privileges attached to officers of the King's household, had occasion to claim some prerogatives, the exercise of which the municipal body of Saint Germain, where they resided, disputed with them. Being assembled in considerable numbers in that town, they obtained the consent of the minister of the household to allow them to send a deputation to the King; and for that purpose chose from amongst them two of his Majesty's *valets de chambre* named Bazire and Soulaigre. The King's *levée* being over, the deputation of the inhabitants of the town of Saint Germain was called in. They entered with confidence; the King looked at them, and assumed his imposing attitude. Bazire, one of these *valets de chambre*, was about to speak, but Louis the Great was looking on him. He no longer saw the Prince he was accustomed to attend at home; he was intimidated, and could not find words; he recovered, however, and began as usual with the word *Sire*. But timidity again overpowered him, and finding himself unable to recollect the slightest particle of what he came to say, he repeated the word *Sire* several times over, and at length concluded by saying, "*Sire*, here is Soulaigre." Soulaigre, who was very angry with Bazire, and expected to acquit himself much better, then began to speak; but he also, after repeating *Sire* several times, found his embarrassment increase upon him, until his confusion equalled that of his colleague; he therefore ended with "*Sire*, here is Bazire." The King smiled, and answered,[1] "Gentle-

[1] In this pleasantry there is nothing bitter or harsh, as in most of those of Louis XV. Louis XIV. never indulged in an expression capable of offending any one, and his repartees, which were almost always full of meaning, often show refined tact. Generally speaking, wit, either poignant and caustic or pleasant and lively, has not been

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men, I have been informed of the business upon which you have been deputed to wait on me, and I will take care that what is right shall be done. I am highly satisfied with the manner in which you have fulfilled your functions as deputies."

MESDAMES, THE AUNTS OF LOUIS XVI.

The position of Mesdames at Court being obscure and unsatisfactory, they were seldom seen there. They spent the chief part of the year either at Bellevue, on that splendid height that commands the proud city and the charming country around it; or at the Hermitage, a little garden at the other end of Versailles, by the road leading to Marly.

Madame Adelaide and Madame Victoire were the only survivors of the four daughters of Louis XV. who outlived their father. The third, Madame Sophie, had died two years before; and the other, Madame Louise, had quitted the world in one of those sudden resolutions that can only be inspired by great religious fervour, or by a quick and ardent spirit that will not be satisfied

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wanting in the descendants of Henri IV. In the *Memoirs* of Madame de Hausset there is a striking observation on this subject:—

"M. Duclos was at Doctor Quesnay's haranguing with his usual warmth. I heard him say to two or three persons, 'The world is always unjust towards great men, ministers, and princes; nothing is more common than to deny them all claims to wit. A few days ago I surprised one of these gentlemen of the *infallible brigade* by telling him that there has been more wit in the House of Bourbon than in any other.' 'Did you prove that?' said some one with a sneer. 'Yes,' said Duclos, 'and I will prove it to you. I presume you will allow that the great Condé was no fool, and the Duchesse de Longueville is celebrated as one of the most brilliant of women. The Regent was unrivalled for wit of every kind. The Prince de Conti, who was elected King of Poland, was distinguished for this quality, and his verses are equal to those of La Fare and Saint Aulaire. The Duc de Bourgogne was learned and enlightened. The Duchess, Madame, daughter to Louis XIV., was an eminent wit, and made epigrams and couplets. The Duc de Maine was also an apt conversationalist; besides, I might add many members of the family now living.'"

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by smaller sacrifices—resolutions that always cause astonishment to men of the world, whatever be their cause.

It was in 1771 that Madame Louise, unmoved by her father's prayers and her sisters' tears, tore herself from the pleasures of the Court, to bury herself at thirty-four years of age in a cloister of Carmelites, and to forget the empty grandeurs of earth beneath a hair-cloth garment in one of the most austere religious orders. Scandal made many attempts to pursue her there, but found no response. And yet Madame Louise was blamed by several persons for having retired such a short distance from the Court, for seeing too much company, and still taking an active part in the affairs of the world and the interests of the State, while she practised the humblest labours like the lowest of the nuns. No doubt her self-denial would have seemed more complete at a greater distance from her family, and with vows of more absolute solitude ; but her sacrifice seems large enough as it was, and without stopping to consider that perhaps the example of piety given by Madame Louise might have been of more use at Court than hid in a cloister, it must be said with truth that such a resolve must have required a great deal of courage. Madame Louise died in December 1787, and her death made so little sensation that, as I was unwell, I did not hear of it till some time afterwards. And it was no wonder, for the Princesses had not been slow to forget her, though they had visited her continually during the life of Louis XV.

The tempers of Mesdames were a little sharpened by the neglect they received at Court ; so they were very hard to please in waiting upon them. The least unpunctuality received a sharp reproof. If I was not afraid of being thought spiteful, I could give some proofs of my own experience. I will only mention that I was sharply scolded one day by Madame Adelaide for putting my hands into a muff that she had given me to carry while she went upstairs. If the pictures of Louis XV. that I have seen are good likenesses, this Princess resembled him

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exactly, and possessed his haughty glances. Madame Victoire was shorter and stouter.

Mesdames the Aunts only came to Paris in the winter, as they had been able to stay at Bellevue up to the 5th of October. Seeing that they were of very little use to their nephew, unable to enjoy his confidence, and fearing measures opposed to their religious opinions, they at last decided on going to Rome. Possibly in their solitude, standing in a position whence they could form a better judgment of the course of events, theirs was the surer presentiment of all the trouble that hung over their family; therefore, they separated themselves from it for life, but they could not prevail on Madame Elizabeth to leave her brother and accompany them. . . . No doubt Mesdames did not find themselves happy at Rome. The news of the fall of the throne of their fathers and the sorrows of their family came to disturb the peace they might have enjoyed in the Eternal City. They could at least carry their tears and prayers for their guilty country to the foot of the altar, till the day when they were forced to quit the hospitable city that had received them, by conquests that the noble head of the Church could neither arrest nor foresee. So they left Rome to retire to Naples; and, after several changes of their place of refuge, Madame Adelaide had the sorrow of seeing her younger sister die at Trieste. Her own mournful existence was shortened by grief, and she soon died herself at Klagenfurth.—*Recollections of a Page*, by Comte d'Hézecques, pp. 79-82.

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